THE
Christian Sufferer supported:
OR, A
DISCOURSE
Concerning the Grounds
OF
Christian Fortitude.

SHEWING

At once that the Sufferings of good men are not inconsistent with Gods special Providence, as also the several supports which our Religion affords them under their Sufferings, and particularly against the fear of a Violent Death.

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LONDON,
Printed for *W. Kettilby*, at the Bishops Head in St. *Pauls* Church-Yard. 1680.

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THE
PREFACE.

THough many of the evils of this life, which we daily complain of, are Phantaſtick and imaginary as our happineſs in this world generally is; And many others, under which we are uneaſie, are intirely owing to our own folly, and the juſt fruit of our wicked lives: Yet certain it is that we are born to trouble as the Sparks flye upwards, and we are beſet with very many, and very ſevere evils. And we can hardly turn any way but we may meet with one or other ready to entertain us with the ſad ſtory of what they feel, or what they juſtly fear. And thoſe very perſons, who ſeem moſt proſperous to the ſtander by, have thoſe troubles mingled with their

Conſolat. ad Polyb.

proſperity which render it not at all deſirable. Look upon all Mortals (*ſays* Seneca) and you will every where find a large and conſtant occaſion for weeping. One man's pinching Poverty calls him out to his daily Labour. Another man is ſoliciteed by his reſtleſs ambition. Another man fears thoſe riches which he had deſired before, and is afflicted with what he himſelf prayed for. One man is rack'd by care, another by labour, a third is diſquieted with a multitude and crowd of Clients or Viſitants. This man is ſorrowful becauſe he hath Children, another becauſe he hath loſt his. *Many are the evils to which we are incident, and which we may therefore juſtly expect: Such are Reproach and Poverty, Sickneſs and Pain, Oppreſſion and Violence, Sorrow for the death*

death of our Friends, and the dread and fear of our own. There are many in the world whoſe miſery is great upon them, and who are perpetually bowed down with ſome or more of theſe evils.

It is great wiſdom therefore to provide againſt theſe evils, and to contrive how to turn them the right way. And ſince it is ſo that we ſhall meet with theſe troubles, it is the higheſt wiſdom to arm our ſelves that they may neither ſurprize, nor hurt us; But that we may be able to continue in great patience and well doing, and at laſt receive an unſpeakable reward.

It is a very ſad conſideration to think how commonly men fear the evils which threaten them, and how rarely they prepare for them. They uſe their endeavours to keep off the ſtroke, when they take no care to bear it, and to make it a bleſſing. They live in perpetual anxiety and diſquiet, and at laſt go in ſorrow

to their graves, whiles they have been negligent of making the right use of their fears, and other afflictions.

It is a certain truth, that God does not take any delight in afflicting the Children of men. He does it for our profit and advantage. And considering the lapsed and corrupt condition of mankind, these evils are necessary for us. They are not only justly inflicted, but they are medicinal also. A constant prosperity is a very formidable condition; and God is then angry with us when he does not chastise our follies. It is our duty to look up to him that strikes us; and to see that we improve our evils to the best advantage, as well as to bear them with courage.

Magna ira est, quando peccantibus non irascitur Deus. Hier. Epist. ad Castrutium.

It is a poor and mean thing barely to design to save our selves from the blow, or only to project that it may do us no harm.

harm. We ought to consider how we may turn these things to our profit. Men at first were only careful that wild Beasts did them no hurt, this was all their design when they fought them. But men in after-times learnt the way to make these Beasts useful to them. They did then eat of their flesh, cloath themselves with their hair, arm themselves with their skins, and make use of some parts of them for Medicines in their distempers. We ought to learn this Art, and to use our evils as instruments of great good. The loss of our Goods, the death of our Friends, the pain of our Bodies, and our fears of Death may be so ordered as to make for the advancement of Piety in us, and the securing our precious and immortal souls.

Plutarch. de Capiend. ex hoſt. utilitate.

And then in the mean time it stands us in hand to bear up under our troubles, and

and to poſſeſs our ſouls in patience; and not to ſuffer our ſelves out of the fear of a temporal evil, to part with an eternal good, and plunge our Souls in everlaſting horror and miſery.

But then, if we would do all this, we muſt have recourſe to thoſe helps and powerful motives, which Chriſtian Religion does afford us. The Doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt will give us the beſt directions, and furniſh us with the moſt effectual aſſiſtances. They are mean and low arguments which are to be found in the Philoſophy of the Heathens, in compariſon with thoſe which our Religion lays before us.

And what thoſe helps and aſſiſtances are you will find in the following Diſcourſe, and I make no doubt but we ſhall alſo find them effectual to gain their end, if we apply our ſelves with great care and diligence (calling in with all fervency the divine

divine grace to our aſſiſtance) to the uſe of them.

They diſparage their Religion that think it a mean and ineffectual Principle: And they reproach it greatly who affirm that it renders men ſneaking and cowardly: For as the Author of it ſhewed the greateſt fortitude and courage when he contemned the world, and witneſſed a good Confeſſion before Pontius Pilate, *ſo do the Principles of this holy Religion mightily fortifie and encourage all the Followers of Jeſus to follow the glorious example of their Lord and Maſter.*

It is an argument of great fortitude to contemn the World, not to be drawn aſide by its blandiſhments, nor diſmaid with its threats; He ſhews a generous and great mind that in cold blond chooſes to die rather than deny the truth, and that can forgive an enemy that thirſts after his bloud. This our Saviour did, and both by his

his Example and his Precepts commends this lesson to us. On the other hand to be transported to revenge upon every little trespass is a certain argument of a weak and feeble mind. And to that purpose it is well observed that generally those who are of the weaker frame, that are most contemptible, and of the shortest wit, are ever most inclined to revenge: And those of the truest valour, and best judgment are the farthest from it. The truth of it is, these men have the same, and no better, pretence to Fortitude, that the Atheist hath to Wit, who is for all his pretences but a Fool. He is a man of true courage that can endure the greatest misery.

Fortiter ille facit, qui miser esse potest.

For the following Discourse I am very sensible of its defects, and know very well that the Argument required a more skilful hand; But be it as it will, I have the satisfaction of a sincere intention of doing

doing well: And as (I bleſs God) I am competently weaned from popular applauſe, ſo I do not find my ſelf much concerned at the cenſures of uncharitable men. And if I have done any thing amiſs in publiſhing the following Papers, though I could juſtly divide the blame between my ſelf and ſome other perſon who is much wiſer, yet I ſhall be content to bear it all my ſelf.

I am very well aſſured in the mean time, that the ſeveral grounds towards our ſupport laid down in the following Diſcourſe, are ſuch as our Religion hath ſuggeſted, and ſuch as are only able to bear us up.

But the Reader is to be put in mind, that it is equally his intereſt and his duty to diſpoſe himſelf for all events of things by an uſeful and holy life. Godlineſs is accompanied with unſpeakable advantages, and he that makes Religion his care and his delight

delight will find Joy and Peace which the world knows not of, and grace to help in the time of need.

As we grow in grace our fears will abate, and as we make Progreſsions in true piety, ſo will our ſtrength and courage increaſe at the ſame time. If we ſpend much time in abſtractions from the world, in ſubduing our irregular deſires, and in a faithful diſcharge of our duty, we ſhall be in great meaſure delivered from the ſlaviſh fear of death whatever ſhape or form it ſhall appear in.

If our diſquiet and trouble were traced to its original, it would be found that moſt of it would flow from the neglect of our duty: And we can never take a better courſe to rid our ſelves of our uneaſineſs, and our fears, than by a diligent betaking our ſelves to our neglected duty. Who is he that will harm us if we be followers of that which is good?

I have nothing farther to request of the Pious Reader, than that he would pray for him that hath made these Papers publick, and especially that he may succeed in his endeavours of doing good to the Souls committed to his charge.

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These following are the greater, though not the only faults of the Preſs, which are not to be imputed to the Author, he not having a ſight of the Sheets as they were wrought off.

PAge 29. *line* 10. *read* pray for, *p.* 77. *l.* 1. *r.* yet in. *l.*5. *r.* purſue. *p.*82. *l.*5. *r.*Theocraſie. *p.*91. *line the laſt,r.*it is. *p.* 93. *l.* 16. *r.* aſſures us. *p.*100. *l.* 20. blot out *death. p.*103. *l.*9. *r. ſhall this. p.*110. *l.*9. *r.this is. p.*113. *l.*19. blot out *it. p.* 177. *l.*18. blot out *And. p.* 196. *r.* a good man. *p.* 201. *l* 12. *r.* very great. *p.*222. *l.* 13. *r.* they crave.

CHAP.

CHAPTER I.

THough Chriſtian Religion will not allow any of its followers to do any injury, nor yet to return, or revenge any; yet it directs and it enables them to bear them. It does not keep off the affliction, but yet it gives them ſtrength to bear it. The ſincere Chriſtian is liable to perſecution and violence, as well as any other man, but then his Religion affords him ſupports beyond any Philoſophy or Inſtitution whatſoever. His Religion does not protect him from reproach, and from pain, from rude uſage, and a violent death; But then it ſecures him from ſinking under his burden,

and from receiving any hurt from it.

If is my intention, in the following discourse, to represent the aids and supports that our Religion does afford to them that are afflicted and persecuted for righteousness sake: And this I shall do for the sake of those who are prone to be amazed and astonished at those evils which they suppose they may be exercised withal. Amongst which, because a violent death is one of the most astonishing, I shall therefore have a particular respect unto that; and it will be very well worth our while to apply our selves to the serious consideration of those things which will be of use to us against so great an evil.

But before I come particularly to consider the aids which our Religion affords against the greatest evils of this world, I shall premise some things for the better making way to my following discourse. And since it is here supposed that good

good men are expoſed to ſevere afflictions and violent death as well as other men, I ſhall before I go any farther,

Firſt, conſider how the ſufferings of Holy and good men in this world are reconcileable to the care and good Providence of God. For ſome men may hence be tempted to think that there is either no God at all, or that he does not concern himſelf in the government of the world, when the moſt God-like and beſt of men are obſerved to meet with the worſt of things.

We are obliged by our Religion to believe the particular care and Providence of God: He that denies this hath advanced far towards Atheiſm, than which there cannot be a more fooliſh, or uncomfortable belief; we ſhall ſoon queſtion the being when once we do deny the Providence of God. The very heathen could ſay that, *To him He that doth nothing ſeemed not to be at all.* The denial of Gods care and

Mihi enim qui nihil agit eſſe omnino non videtur. Cicero de Natur. deorum. l. 2.

Providence ſubverts all Piety and true Religion. This puts a bar to all vertue and real Godlineſs. He that comes to God muſt believe not only *that he is, but that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him:* Were it not for this belief I do not ſee how there could be any ſuch thing as a pious man, For he that doth deny Gods care and government deſtroys all the motives to and foundations of true Piety, Were it not for this belief men would want a ground for their devotion, and their patient ſuffering of perſecutions for righteouſneſs ſake. We ſhould have ſmall encouragement to pray to Him that does not hear and regard us; we ſhall return him cold thanks for the mercies we enjoy when we do not believe they came from him; And ſhall be tempted quickly to forget him whom we do not think concerned in any of our affairs. It is not likely we ſhould ſupport with courage under our evils when once

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we judge that God concerns not himſelf in what paſſeth here below. This opinion will ſoon Cramp us, it will enfeeble and diſpirit us, and we ſhall not abound in the work of the Lord, unleſs we firſt believe that our labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. This world is now an uncomfortable place, but then it would ſcarce be tolerable. It is a ſenſe that God governs that makes it any thing eaſie. We were in an ill plight did things come to paſs by Fate or Chance. *How could I live in the world* (ſays the Heathen Emperour) *that is empty of God, and void of a Providence?*

Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ. Mar. Ant. l. 2. Sect. 8.

Our Religion gives us great aſſurance of Gods particular care and providence; I do not deſign at preſent to enter upon that argument: I ſhall ſhew that the miſeries that befal good men in this life are not inconſiſtent with this Providence of God. And to that purpoſe I ſhall deſire that the following particulars may be conſidered.

Firſt, the perſons upon whom theſe evils fall.

Secondly, the evils themſelves.

Thirdly, the ends and uſefulneſs of theſe things.

Laſtly, the ſudports of good men under theſe evils.

I. The Perſons upon whom theſe evils fall, and they are ſuppoſed to be righteous and good men: Now here it is to be conſidered,

1. That this is ſometimes ſuppoſed when it is not really ſo. They are not all righteous and holy men that are reputed ſo. God knows who are his, we know it not. We ought in charity to judge all men good of whom we know no evil. But we do not then always judge of the thing as it is. We are often miſtaken: A man may deceive himſelf, and very eaſily impoſe upon us. Hypocriſie does lurk very frequently under the diſguiſe of Piety. And there are ſome faults and irregularities that have the appearances of vertue. We ſee

but

but the surface of mens conversation, we are not acquainted with their principle, and their aim. Besides men appear at their best in company; They are dressed up when they go abroad: God alone sees the heart, and searches the reins: He alone knows the inward thought and purpose of a man.

It is much more easie to discern a man to be wicked, than to be sincerely pious, and truly good. The *works of the flesh are manifest*, says the Apostle, but he does not say so of the *fruits* of the *Spirit* also. Besides that many things must conspire to make him *righteous* and *good*, whereas one vice is enough to render him *evil*. Goodness and true Piety are very comprehensive things. Righteousness implies all vertues in conjunction; He that is righteous must be godly, just, and temperate: Every man that makes a great profession is not universally and strictly righteous. The Apostle

Gal. 5. 19, 22.

Bonum ex integris, malum ex quolibet defectu.

Ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ πᾶσα ὁμοῦ ἀρετή.

tells us, that the *grace of God* teacheth us that we ſhould *live ſo-*
Tit. 2. 12. *berly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world.* Theſe are but few words, but they are very comprehenſive.

Godlineſs or Piety contains much, that is, our whole duty toward God. It is not enough that we believe aright, that we be Orthodox in our Faith, and that we be of the moſt Reformed Church and Communion; that we be kind to the Miniſters of Religion, and contend for the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints; That we read the Scriptures, that we hear them Preached, and frequently receive the Holy Sacrament. All theſe things do not ſpeak us godly and pious men. Before we can be that, we muſt ariſe higher; we muſt love God with all our heart, fear him above all, pray to him fervently, and give him hearty thanks for his mercies: We muſt chearfully ſubmit to his Will, and not murmur againſt

againſt his Providence; we muſt honour his Name, and his Word, and all his Divine Inſtitutions. We muſt breath after Him, delight in Him, and refer all to Him. Our Religion muſt be no Mechanical, Theatrical, or affected thing: It muſt be in us a principle of life and of power; He that is truly Religious hath a faith in God under all events of things, and will chooſe to ſuffer rather than offend Him. In a word, he commits all his concerns to God, and it is his meat and drink to do his Will: He does not only do Him outward Homage, but he inwardly loves and fears Him, and deſires to be like Him.

Righteouſneſs and Juſtice alſo is very large and comprehenſive, and contains many duties under it. It is not enough that we do no wrong, we muſt revenge none that is done to us. We muſt not only not oppreſs, but we muſt alſo not covet. It is not enough that we do no hurt, we muſt alſo do good

to

to our Brother, that is, to every man as we have opportunity. We muſt do as we would be done by; And we are obliged ſeverally as we ſtand related to each other. The righteous man hurts no man in body, goods, or fame; he is merciful to the poor, and ſtrictly juſt to all men. He is faithful to his Prince, dutiful to his Parents, true to his Friends, grateful to his Benefactors, and gentle to his Inferiours; affable, and of eaſie acceſs, void of malice and guile in all his words and actions. So far is he from attempting to kill that he does not hate his Brother; and ſo far from unchaſte embraces that he does not indulge himſelf in an undecent word, or an impure thought; ſo far from ſpeaking evil that he thinks it not. His love is without diſſimulation or deſign, his Compaſſions are great, and his Alms hold proportion to his ability, and his brothers needs. He is tender of his brothers goods and reputation,

reputation, and rejoyces in his proſperity as ſincerely as in his own, and is ſo far from obſtructing it that he does not envy it. He is the moſt diligent Governour, the moſt Loyal Subject, the moſt dutiful Child, and kind Parent, and true Friend; He is true to all his truſts, and righteous in all his relations, and in all his dealings is all of a piece.

Sobriety alſo contains much in it, And he that is ſober is far from pride and vanity; He does not indulge his luſt and ſenſual appetite, and his ambition and vain-glory, but governs himſelf by Religion, and by Reaſon: He allows himſelf as to his meats and drink, his garb and his refreſhments, what his nature and his circumſtances, not what his luſt demands.

Thus I have given you a ſhort Character of the pious and good man: It is to be feared the number of them is ſmall among thoſe that profeſs the Religion of Chriſt Jeſus.

Jesus. We do commonly under all our forms of Godliness deny the power of it: And when we shew great zeal for some things of Religion we are far from pure Religion and undefiled. We judge of our selves by false measures, and therefore think our selves to be something when we are nothing. We judge our selves good because our Principles or our Party is so, or because we are better than some others are. We judge well of our selves because we comply with the Letter of the Law, and live so well that the world cannot reprove us. It is to be feared that the number of those that are strictly and universally good is but small, and that among the crowd of Professors there are many Hypocrites and Unbelievers.

2. Supposing these sufferers sincerely and universally good, yet they are but imperfectly so. There is some folly bound up in the heart of the wisest and best of men; There is some defect in the most perfect

Saint.

Saint. All menneed ſome grains of allowance: And as there is ſome flaw in the greateſt wit, ſo there is ſome defect even in them who have made the greateſt proficiency in goodneſs. And whatinjuſtice is there in chaſtiſing the follies of good men; eſpecially when this chaſtiſement is for their Emendation? It is folly and fondneſs to ſuffer an otherwiſe towardly Child to go on in an evil and unbecoming courſe. It is greater kindneſs to correct than to indulge him. There is no man ſo good but doth ſometimes go aſtray. It is noimpeachment of the Divine Providence to correct the faults of the beſt of men: This is juſt and very conſiſtent with the Divine care and providence: It rather confirmes it,and ſtrengthens our belief of it. *I have found* David *my Servant, with my holy Oyl I have anointed him. The enemy ſhall not exact upon him, nor the Son of wickedneſs afflict him. Alſo I will make him my firſt-born, higher than the*

Nullum magnum ingenium ſine venia placuit. Sen.

Pſa. 89. 20, 22, 27, 28, 29.

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the Kings of the earth: My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant shall stand fast with him, his Seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his Throne as the Laws of heaven. These are great Promises, and such as give assurance of a very particular Care and Providence: But all these great things do not imply that *Davids* Children shall not be chastised: They may be corrected for their sin without the least diminution to the Promise, or impeachment of Gods care and Providence. It follows, *If his*
Ver. 30, 32, 33, 34. *Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments — then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* It is an act of mercy and kindness in God to correct his Children; *Whom*
Heb. 12. 6. *the Lord loveth he chasteneth.* If God

God did it not, we might have greater cauſe to impeach his care, and doubt of his Providence. We commend the care of that Maſter of a Family who does correct the diſorders of his own houſe: Good men are Gods peculiar, His Church is His Family. *You only have I known of all the Families of the earth, therefore will I puniſh you for all your iniquities*; not to do thus would be cruelty and diſregard. And it is the greateſt Plague to meet with none at all. It is ſaid of the worſt of men, *They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men.* And it is a ſevere threat, no merciful promiſe which we read, *I will not puniſh your Daughters when they commit Whoredom, nor your Spouſes when they commit Adultery.* As the faults of good men make it juſt that they ſhould be corrected, ſo their relation to God makes it neceſſary. God may juſtly do it becauſe they deſerve it, and He does it becauſe they are His.

Intelligimus eſſe nos Deo curæ, quibus quoniam peccamus ſcitur. Lactant. Inſt. l. 5. c. 23.

Amos 3. 2.

Pſa. 73. 5.

Hoſ. 4 14.

His. There is in it *Juſtice*, and *Kindneſs* at once.

Be it then, that the good man ſuffer, yet hath he deſerved it from God; Be it, that he is ſincerely good, yet he is imperfectly ſo; He fails in many things: He is too cold in his Prayers, or too weak in his Faith; too contracted in his Charity, or too propenſe to the world. Be it, that he be Gold, there may be ſome droſs that may be taken away by the Diſcipline of Heaven. Let us conſider in the next place,

II. The evils themſelves which are in this world the lot and portion of good men. They meet with Evils, but what Evils are they? How great, and how durable, or what proportion do they bear to their demerits or their mercies? They meet with Evils indeed, but not with the worſt of things. And this will appear, if we conſider,

1. That the evils which good men meet with are not ſtrictly evils.

They

They are in ſome ſenſe Evils, but not of the greater ſize and character. That is indeed a great *Evil* which makes us *evil*, and is not conſiſtent with real goodneſs. As that is truly good which makes us good, ſo that is only an evil in the trueſt ſenſe which makes us ſo. Poverty, reſtraint, reproach, ſickneſs, death are in ſome ſenſe evils: But they are not ſuch evils as Pride, Wantonneſs, Prophaneſs, Injuſtice, a guilty mind and unquiet Conſcience. They are evils, but they are tolerable ones. *The Spirit of a man may bear his infirmity, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* The good man meets with evils then, but not with the worſt of things, for ſuch things will imply him not to be good. A good man may be killed, but he cannot be hurt: Men may kill his body, they cannot deprave his ſoul: He may be baniſhed from his Country, not from his God: Men may make him poor, they cannot make him co-

vetous and proud, earthly and ſenſual; They may load him with Calumnies, but not with Guilt: He hath goods of which he cannot be rifled and ſtripped. He may fall under the anger and power of a Tyrant, or popular Tumult, but is not by that force robbed of his integrity. The good man is well dealt with, he hath good things which no malice or force can take away. Why do we blame Providence which allots the beſt of things to the beſt of men? Is it not better to be modeſt than to be rich? Is it not better to be good than to be great? Is not integrity of mind better than health of body? If it be, then the good man does not meet with the very worſt of things, and though he may be afflicted with ſundry evils which other men avoid, yet he hath many very good things belonging to him which other men want.

Τὶ κακὸν ποιεῖ ἡ προνοια, εἰ τοῖς χρείττοσι τὰ χρείττω δίδωσιν; Arrian. Epictet. l. 3. c. 17.

2. The evils which good men meet with are but Temporal evils at moſt.

moſt. Sharp they may be, and painful to the fleſh, but they are but ſhort. The beſt man may meet with a fiery trial, he will not fall into everlaſting burnings. His ſufferings bear no proportion to a future miſery or glory.

If we think of eternal ſorrows, we cannot think our ſhort ones worthy to be compared with them; The good man meets with all his pain here, there is none remains for him in reverſion. Alas! what compare is there between a fire and fagot, and eternal fire? Between a Gibbet and a Rack, and the Worm that never dies, and the fire that never goes out? What proportion is there between Time and Eternity? Between a ſorrow that laſteth for a moment, and that ſorrow which excludes all hope of an end?

But then if we think of the Joys of Heaven, that are the portion of the Pious and perſevering Chriſtian, we ſhall find that all the

ſorrows of this life bear no proportion to them. The Apoſtle tells us that they are not to be compared.

Rom. 8. 18 *I reckon* (ſays he) *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* If then we turn our Eyes from Time upon Eternity, from the ſufferings we feel to the glory which we wait for, we ſhall not eaſily ſink under our burden, nor any longer impeach the Divine Care and Providence. *For*

2 Cor. 4. 16. *which cauſe we faint not* (ſays the Apoſtle) *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are ſeen.* Let us now conſider,

3. The ends and uſefulneſs of theſe Evils which happen to good men in this life: For though we call theſe ſufferings evils, yet are they occaſions of very much good. And,

1. They are for the general good of

of the world, and the advancement of Religion amongſt men. Hereby men have taken occaſion to enquire into the Principles of them that ſuffer, and to acquaint themſelves with that Religion which they overlooked before: Hence they have been convinced of the truth of Religion, and that it is a reality, and will bear men up under all the evils of this world. The patient ſufferings of Holy men have greatly adorned, and ſpread the Religion for which they ſuffered. Hence many new Converts have been brought into the Faith, and hereby men have been confirmed in the truth: The undanted ſufferings of good men for Religion have ſpread it more than learned Books, and ſubtle Arguments could do. Every man is not able to judge of the ſtrength of an Argument, nor to detect the Sophiſtry of cunning men. He that is conſtant to the death does more by his patient ſufferings than he could have

done by his Wit and Learning.

We gain a great credit to our Religion when it ſupports us under our Evils which we ſuffer: They that ſee this are convinced greatly in their Conſciences: They now believe Religion not only true, but a Principle of power and great efficacy, and that the pious man ſerves God for greater reſpects than any worldly thing: It was a great Calumny againſt *Job*, that he ſerved God for his worldly ends only; *But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*, Thus doth Satan accuſe *Job* unto God: How falſe this Accuſation was appeared from what followed. By his patient enduring he ſhewed that he was a perfect and upright man, that feared God, and eſchewed evil. It is a cheap thing to profeſs Religion when there is no danger in it: This does not recommend it unto others. Men will ſuſpect that this

Job 1. 11.

this profeſſion either ſerves a worldly intereſt, or was owing to our education, or ſome chance. But he that dares to die for his Religion does greatly commend it to the Conſciences of men.

By this means the world was vanquiſhed, and Chriſtian Religion planted among men. This courſe was of great power towards the confounding of Infidels, and the gaining new Believers; It ſerved to ſtrengthen the weak, and confirm the ſtrong: The bloud of Martyrs was the Seed of the Church, and he that died for his Religion ſpread it. This was of greater moment than learned Arguments, or carnal weapons. Our Religion was founded upon ſufferings, and built upon a Crucified Saviour.

2. As the ſufferings of good men are for the good of the world, ſo they are for the good of thoſe men who ſuffer: They are gainers by their ſufferings, and this Con-

ſideration doth ſerve to clear the care and Providence of God.

It may ſeem ſtrange that the ſevere afflictions that befall us ſhould be for our advantage. That I ſhould bury my only Child, and my deareſt Friend, loſe my Eſtate, and be caſt in a righteous cauſe, that I ſhould meet with contempt and ſcorn, and great diſappointments are indeed great trials, but ſuch as may conduce (if I be not wanting) greatly to my advantage. It is true, that the ſorrowful ſufferer does not ſee how this can be; But yet afterwards he ſees it clearly, and lives to bleſs God for thoſe very evils under which he ſometimes groaned. We know that Fire and the Lance, rough and harſh medicines and methods cure ſome men that were in danger of periſhing. *Joſeph*'s impriſonment was no likely way to his advancement, but yet God made it the occaſion of his riſe. We do not preſently underſtand theſe things, but

but what Jesus said to *Peter* we find often verified in the case before us: *What I do* (says he) *thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.* One would think Clay and Spittle might put out the eyes of him that sees, and yet we know our Lord by this means cured the blind. Joh. 13.7.

I shall lay before you some of the advantages which a good man receives from the sufferings which befall him in this life.

First, These evils conduce much to the destroying of the remainders of sin in a good man. Our evil habits are not rooted out all at once: There is some folly bound up in the hearts of good men, which this rod of correction serves to beat out. Prosperity generally hides our wickedness from us; Afflictions are faithful friends, they tell us our fault plainly, they awaken us, and conduce much towards our amendmeut. And that they may gain their end, it is frequent-

frequently ſo contrived by the wiſe Providence of God that we may read our *ſin* in our very *ſuffering*. As our affliction is the unhappy *off-ſpring* of our fault, ſo it hath upon it ſome *features* and *ſignatures* that ſpeak it like its Parent. We may very often read in our *ſuffering* what was our *ſin*. It were very eaſie to give you many inſtances to this purpoſe were it not too much out of the way of the preſent diſcourſe. It is very certain that our afflictions are inſtructive and very faithful Monitors to us. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *but now have I kept thy word.* Again, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes.* There is nothing ſo formidable as a conſtant and uninterrupted proſperity. We are generally the worſe for being proſperous: And it is too often ſo, that our Vices and our Proſperity grow up together. It is rarely ſeen but even good men are ſomewhat the worſe

Pſal. 119. 67, 71.

on

on this ſcore. It was a ſaying of one of the Ancients, *That he thought none could be more unhappy than that man, who never met with any adverſity.* It is very rarely that we make any great attainments unleſs we meet with Croſſes.

Secondly, They are very uſeful to the weaning of good men from this world and all worldly things. They teach them to make a right judgment and eſtimate of things; And this is a fruit of great wiſdom, and a ſtep to the greateſt perfection. He that proſpers knows but one part of the world, he looks upon it on one ſide, and does not know it throughly. We do not know it perfectly till we come to ſuffer; Till then we ſee the fair and glozing and falſe ſide of the world. He that ſees no more than this runs a great hazard. The Shepherd in the Fable, was tempted out of the hopes of gain to turn a Merchant; He did ſo, and loſt his adventure upon a rough and tempeſtuous

peſtuous Sea: But then he gained this wiſdom by his loſs, not to truſt to the Sea when it was calm. The world does us the greateſt miſchief when it ſmiles, and never does us a greater hurt than when it ſpeaks us fair. It is a great proficiency to be able to contemn the ſmiles and Courtſhip of the world.

Thirdly, They are of great uſe to make us more earneſt contenders for heaven. They bring the good man nearer to God, and to his happineſs. By theſe ſufferings the good man is prepared for the enjoyment of God. The contempt he meets with here makes him aſpire after a future glory: His poverty and pain, and confinement put him upon breathing after the plenty, and the joys and enlargement of a future ſtate, what he loſes here he gains above. And we are very happy when we do, whatever the occaſion be, endeavour earneſtly after an incorruptible Crown.

Fourthly, They give us an experiment

riment of our ſelves; We know not what we are till we are tried, It is eaſie to be valiant when we are in no danger: Our courage is then proved when we are ſurrounded with danger; It is the Storm that ſhews the skill and courage of the Sea-man. We are reproached; we ſhall now know whether or no we can pray for and forgive them that ſpeak evil of us without a cauſe. We are injured; now we ſhall know whether or not we can forgive an enemy. We loſe our goods; we ſhall now ſee whether our faith and patience be genuine or not. We are affronted; this is the time to take a proof of our meekneſs. If theſe things had not hapned the graces of good men had not been known to others, nor to themſelves. But by this means good men have the comfort of this experience and others an advantage alſo. It is much better to bear our evils well than to meet with none at all. *Count it all joy when ye fall* Jam. 1. 2, 3.

fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith worketh
Rom. 4. *patience. We glory in tribulation also*
3, 4. (says St. *Paul*) *knowing that tribulation worketh patience*; *wherein ye*
1 Pet. 1. 6. *greatly rejoyce* (says St. *Peter*) *though now for a season* (*if need be*) *ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried in fire, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt.* Though we had theſe graces before, we might yet have been without the comfort, and our Brother without the advantage, and God without the glory had we not been tried.

Fifthly, Good men that have ſuffered much, and in a good cauſe, and with an undanted courage, ſhall have a greater reward in an other life. There are degrees of glory in the other ſtate, and theſe holy men ſhall be placed in the
Rom. 8. 17. higher Stations of glory. *If we ſuffer*

ſuffer with him, we ſhall be glorified together. If we bear an heavy Croſs, we ſhall receive a glorious Crown. I conſider,

IV. That good men are ſupported under their ſorrows and troubles here. And if God enable them to endure, well may he lay upon them what he pleaſeth. For the good man is well dealt with when he is enabled here, and hath a ſure Reward hereafter. I do intend to diſcourſe of the ſupports which the pious man will meet with in another place.

CHAP. II.

HAving cleared the good Providence of God, and ſhewed that the ſufferings of good men are very conſiſtent with his particular care and government, I ſhall

Secondly, Shew you the great reaſonableneſs of the Laws of Chriſt,

Chriſt, by which we are oblige
to ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, n
only reproach, and the loſs of ou
worldly goods, but even life it ſel
Our Saviours Precept is plain i
Luk. 14. 26. with Mat. 10. 37. this matter. *If any man come to m* (ſays Chriſt) *and hate not his Fa ther and Mother, and Wife and Chil dren, and Brethren and Siſters, yea and his own life alſo, he cannot be m Diſciple.* The meaning of the words is plainly this, that we ca not be the true Diſciples of Chri if we do not prefer his command before Father and Mother, & and our very life it ſelf. To hat theſe things is to love them leſs tha we do our Saviour, as appear
Luk. 9. 23. from a parallel place. It is but f we ſhould chooſe to dye rathe than deny our Saviour, and re nounce our Religion. And we ar
Mar. 8. 34. frequently commanded by ou Lord to deny our ſelves, to tak up his Croſs, to follow him: An we are aſſured that he that loſeth his life for his ſake ſhall find it. O

the

the other hand we are excluded from the hopes of mercy in another life if we do now deny our Saviour before men. *If we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him. If we deny him, he will alſo deny us.* It is our intereſt as much as it is our duty to part with life it ſelf in the confeſſion of the truth. *Fear not them* (ſays our Saviour) *which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul; But rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in Hell.* And in another place he tells us; *He that loveth his life ſhall loſe it: And he that hateth his life in this world, ſhall keep it unto life eternal.*

Mat. 10. 39. Ver. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Mat. 10. 28. Joh. 12. 25.

Now certain it is that our Lord is no hard Maſter, and that all his Laws are very righteous and good: Our Bleſſed Saviour promiſeth us reſt if we will become his followers, and aſſures us, that his yoke is eaſie, and his burden light. He that undertakes the Laws of Chriſt, and ſincerely ſets himſelf

Mat. 11. 29, 30.

to obey them, will never have any cauſe to complain of his Maſter, or his Work. They that find fault with the Laws of Chriſt are thoſe that do not underſtand them aright, or never did ſeriouſly apply themſelves to the practice of them. That we ſhould chooſe to die rather than break his Laws, and renounce his Religion, is indeed one of the hardeſt Laws of Chriſt: But yet I ſhall ſhew the reaſonableneſs of it. And to that purpoſe ſhall commend to your ſerious conſideration the following particulars.

Firſt, Let us conſider whoſe Law this is, and we ſhall find that the Author of the Law does greatly recommend it to us: How hard ſoever it may otherwiſe ſeem, yet that it is the command of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that conſideration is of great moment to reconcile us to it. We ought not to think any thing unreaſonable or hard which our Bleſſed Lord, and dear Redeemer lays upon us: For we

we are well assured of his great love and affection towards us; He hath given us great proof that he loved us, when he was content for our sakes not only to become a man, but to die a shameful and painful death to bring us unto God.

Let us stay a while upon this consideration, and meditate upon the unheard-of love of our Lord Jesus, and we shall soon see great cause to think him a good Master even then when he does oblige us to die for his sake. If our hearts be cold and chill, if we find them dampt and sinking, let us then meditate of our Lords love, and that will be of great use to inflame them, and give them spirit. Does Jesus say, that we *must not fear them that kill the body*, that we *must hate our own lives if we will be his Disciples.* Good is that word of our Dearest Lord, will the pious Soul say: Death shall be welcome when ever it comes, and it will be not only

our duty to die when our Lord would have us, but our *honour* and great Priviledge to be thought worthy to die for him who was contented to die for us. Alas, this is but very little to what our Lord and Master hath done for us. He was from everlasting the eternal Son of the Father; He was happy and glorious, and yet for our sakes he was content to stoop from *Heaven* to *Earth*, from the *happiness* and *glories* above to the *pain* and *contempt* of this lower world. He that was the brightness of his Fathers glory was willing to be eclipsed and obscured with our flesh, and with our infirmities. He, that upheld all things by the word of his power, was yet contented to be inclosed in the Womb of a Virgin, to be wrapt up in swadling cloaths, to lie in a Stable, to be subject to his Creatures, to be tempted by the Devil, to be hungred and thirsty, to be buffeted and hanged on a Tree, that he might

might ſave loſt Mankind. He was at theſe pains for the helpleſs, and for ſinners, for Caitiffs and Rebels, for them who had diſhonoured his Father, and ruined themſelves. Here is a love without a Parallel, a love that paſſeth knowledge, a love that is ſtronger than death, and that ſurpaſſeth the love of women. Here are all the dimenſions of love; here is height and depth, a length and breadth: Jeſus did that for his Enemies which rarely hath been done for the greateſt Friends and Benefactors. Greater love than this hath no man, that he ſhould lay down his life for his Friend. This is the higheſt flight of friendſhip, and we have but few examples of it. Our Lords kindneſs roſe higher by far: He died for the ungodly, for the weak, and them that were without all hope.

Who can ſeriouſly think of this and not find himſelf conſtrained by the ove of Jeſus to be willing to

die for him? It is an eaſie task that lies upon us, to love him that hath firſt loved us, and to die for him that died for us; This is very reaſonable, and a moſt gentle command, to lay down our life for him who firſt laid down his for us. We ſee ſome Servants will hazard their lives for the ſake of their Maſters; Loyal Subjects will not ſtick to ſhed their bloud in defence of their King and Country. There are thoſe would dare to die for a good man, or for a faithful friend: My Lord muſt needs be dearer to me than any of my Relatives, or my fellow-Creatures. I muſt be very ungrateful if I forget his love.

But that which ſtill does farther recommend this Law to us, is this, That our Saviour commands no more than what he himſelf did. He would we ſhould die in bearing witneſs to the truth. It is fit we ſhould do it, and he led us the way. He hath recommended this

Precept

Precept to us not only by his Doctrine, but by his Example alſo. Indeed, our Lord was ſilent when he was reproached, and inconſiſtently accuſed, but he was not ſo when he was adjured by the High Prieſt to tell him whether he were the Chriſt, the Son of God or not. He witneſſed a good Confeſſion before *Pontius Pilate*, and tells him, *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the truth.* Our Lord ſealed the truth with his own bloud, and does not put his Followers upon that which he declined himſelf. Mat. 26. 63, 64. Joh. 18. 17.

This Example of our Lord does give great force to his Law: And it is very reaſonable we ſhould do what the great Captain of our Salvation hath done. Every where we judge this very reaſonable: The Souldier thinks himſelf obliged to ſhew courage when he ſees his General expoſe himſelf to the thickeſt of the danger. And the

Servant thinks himſelf well dealt with when his Maſter commands no more of him than what he is willing to do himſelf. The Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord. That is not thought an hard Law which the Law-giver ſuffers himſelf to be concluded by.

2. Let us conſider the command it ſelf, and that is, that we ſhould rather part with this life than to deny our Lord, and forfeit our hopes of a better life. This may at firſt ſight ſeem a very hard ſaying, but when we draw near, and conſider it well, we ſhall find it a very reaſonable Law, and that it is no objection againſt what our Lord hath ſaid, when he tells us, that his *yoke is eaſie, and his burden light.*

The truth is, we diſquiet our ſelves in vain, and as our happineſs is but phantaſtick and imaginary, ſo is a great part of our miſery alſo. We make a falſe judgment of things,

things, and ſet a very unequal rate and price upon them. And this we commonly do in the account we make of life and death. For as we eſteem of this life at a greater rate than we ought, ſo we judge death to be a greater evil than indeed it is. I deſire that you would (under this general head) conſider well the following particulars. And,

1. That barely to live is not in it ſelf a thing of any vaſt moment; It is no high Prerogative and unvaluable peculiar. For the ſmalleſt Mite or Ante, the vileſt Worm or Serpent live as well as we. When *Marcellinus* was ſick, all that were about him flattered him, and ſaid that which they thought would pleaſe him moſt; Every man gave him that Counſel that they thought would be to him the moſt grateful. But there came to him an honeſt Stoick, that dealt ſincerely with him. He told him, that he need not much afflict himſelf as

if

if ſome great matter were before him: *It is* (ſays he) *no great thing to live; All thy Servants live, and every Animal does it: It is a great thing to die well, wiſely, and undauntedly.* Life conſidered abſtractly is of no great price, and there are many Creatures that have it which we do not greatly value upon that ſcore. And when our Lord requires us to give up our life, he does not command any great thing of us in doing that. Life it ſelf is at beſt but a manner or circumſtance of being, and there are thoſe Creatures which have it, whoſe condition is yet very mean and low. Life alone does not import any happineſs at all: Inſtead of that, it often ſerves to make them who have it ſenſible of their miſery.

Non eſt res magna vivere, omnes ſervi tui vivunt, omnia animalia, &c. Sen. Ep. 77.

2. That ſuppoſing life more valuable than it is, yet it is but a very little of it we loſe when we part with it by the hands of violence. It is indeed of very great moment

how

how we live, of very little *how long*. He that takes our life away does rob us of very little. And when God calls for it, we have no cauſe to murmur and complain. We generally take falſe meaſures here, and there is nothing in which we more frequently miſcount than we do in this matter. And hence it is that we judge ſo much amiſs of our Saviours Laws. For what is this life that we put ſo great a price upon? What it is at the moſt? I reckon that what we have ſpent of it is not at all, and what is to come is not yet. That which is paſt is gone irrecoverably, and that which is to come is not yet at all; ſo that all we have, and all that we can be ſaid to loſe is the preſent moment. In all things elſe we cannot properly be ſaid to be deprived of what we had loſt before, or to loſe what we never had. No man can be deprived of more than what he hath in actual poſſeſſion. We live the preſent moment only: For all

Μόνον ζῇ ἕκαστος τὸ παρὸν τοῦτο — τὰ δ' ἄλλα, ἢ βεβίωται ἢ ἐν ἀδήλῳ. Mar. Ant. l.3. c.8.

all the reſt, we either have lived it, or it is uncertain whether we ſhall or not. This is all then that we loſe, and indeed all that we can enjoy at once, the preſent moment. So that one of the Ancients ſaid very truly, *That he that died very old, and he that died very young loſt but one and the ſame thing: For* ſaid he, *the preſent time is that only which any man can be deprived of.* Agreeably hereunto the Apoſtle ſpeaks when he calls the ſufferings of this life, the ſufferings of *this preſent time.* It is but a moment that we ſuffer, for it is but a moment that we live at once. It is true indeed, we flatter our ſelves with a long time that we have to live, but we cannot promiſe our ſelves that which is to come; and we cannot with any propriety of Speech be ſaid to loſe that which we never had.

Id. l. 2. c. 12.

Τὰ νῦν καιρῷ. Rom. 8. 18.

3. That ſuppoſing we might have lived longer, had we not been cut off by the hands of violence, yet

yet is this a very inconſiderable loſs; Our Saviour is no hard Maſter if he call us hence in our youth and full ſtrength, and ſuffer us to fall under the hands of violence. What does all this amount to? We do but die a little ſooner, and after another way. And ſure we have little love for our Lord and our Religion if we think much to do this.

For ſuppoſe we might have lived longer yet, that is not much which we loſe. Perhaps a few years or months, and what does it ſignifie? What proportion does this hold to Eternity? Or of what moment is it if you conſider the boundleſs love of God and our bleſſed Saviour? A long life is no infallible token of Gods favour under the Goſpel. This was indeed a bleſſing under the Law of *Moſes*. But we are now received into a better Covenant. We know it was otherwiſe before the Law of *Moſes* was given. *Enoch*, that walked with

with God, and that pleaſed him lived the ſhorteſt life of any of th Patriarchs from *Adam* to *Noa*

Ὃν ὁ Θεὸς φιλεῖ ἀποθνήσκει. And many times ſo it is, that *he di in his youth whom God loves.* hath been eſteemed a favour to b removed hence betimes. We mu die, and if we are ſure of that, is of ſmall moment when we di And therefore when we die f our Religion, we do not loſe muc for the ſake of it; For we muſt a die: We are but deprived of th which we knew before would e long be taken from us. If ou houſe had not been pulled or fire down, yet in a little while it woul have fallen of it ſelf. He tha kills me does not by doing ſo mak me mortal, he found me ſo. W have no cauſe to fear death whe we know we cannot eſcape it When we are killed, it is life, no immortality which we are depri- ved of. Let us not phanſie tha our Lord requires any great matter of us, when he com- mands

Si mortem poſſemus evadere, meritò mori timeremus. Cypr. l. 4. Ep. 6.

mands us to lay down our life for his ſake. We muſt have died if he had never made this Law, and it is a ſmall matter which he requires of us when he would have us die for him. When one told *Socrates* that the *Athenians* had decreed his death: He told him that *Nature had decreed* theirs alſo. His death was haſtened by them, it was determined by a ſuperiour Power. We have no cauſe to complain, but great cauſe to bleſs God, that ſince we muſt die, he is pleaſed to call upon us to do it in a righteous cauſe. We are very fooliſh and fond, if we now murmur and complain. *Diogen. Laertius. Socrat.*

I know very well that we are affrighted with the pain of a violent and unnatural death; And perhaps the ſhame and reproach of it is alſo irkſom to us.

For its reproach and ſhame it is the moſt trifling pretence imaginable. And I can hardly think that a wiſe man upon ſecond thoughts can

can be moved with ſo vain a conſideration as this. The truth of it is, there is not any ſhadow in this pretence. For to die for our Religion, whatever our death be, is not more our duty than it is our *priviledge*, and our honour. The firſt Chriſtians judged thus. They rejoyced in this, that they were eſteemed worthy to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt. It is no reproach to ſuffer any death in a good cauſe. He that dies for his Country is not by any wiſe man reproached becauſe he was found dead in a ditch. It is the Crime, not the kind of death, that makes death diſhonourable. He falls well, whatever hand pull him down, that falls in a good cauſe. Our Lord died upon a Croſs. His was a *painful*, and the moſt *ſhameful* death. It was the puniſhment of *Slaves*, and the moſt infamous Criminals. Now it is
Heb. 12.2. ſaid of our Lord, that he *endured the Croſs deſpiſing the ſhame*. The pain was very afflictive to his fleſh,

but

but yet ſuch was his love that he endured that: But then his death was as ſhameful as his Enemies could have deviſed, but the ſhame our Lord *deſpiſed*. And ſure if our Lord did this for us, well may we do it for him. Well may we glory in that Croſs which our Lord hath born.

Τὸ μὲν ἀφόρητον ἐξαίρει, τὸ δὲ χρονίζον φορητόν. M. Antonin. l. 7. 2. 23.

But then for the pain of a violent death we ſhall not need much to diſquiet our ſelves; we affright our ſelves without cauſe, and we do diſquiet our ſelves in vain. We think of Racks and Wheels, of fire and faggot when we think of our Enemies, from whom we expect no mercy. But it is certain, that we often torment our ſelves with evils that ſhall never overtake us: But yet we will ſuppoſe that we meet with great pain: What then? This pain will be tolerable, or not: If it be tolerable, we may endure it; if not, we ſhall not be long troubled with it. That will end, or we ſhall. We cannot laſt long under extreme pain.

Beſides, it is not unlikely but a diſeaſe may put us to ſharper and longer pains than a Tyrant will ever do. A *Calenture* may be more troubleſom to us than *fire* and *faggot*, and the flames of a Fever may ſcorch us more ſeverely than other flames: And they that have felt the extremity of the Gout and Stone will eaſily grant that it is a favour to die by the Sword of a Tyrant. We do not know but we may be tortured on our Beds; and what great matter is it whether we be exerciſed upon a Bed, or upon a Wheel. It is very likely that a Tyrant will ſooner releaſe us than a diſeaſe. *What needeſt thou care* (ſays the heathen Philoſopher) *what way thou goeſt into another World? They are alike. But yet if thou art willing to know the truth, that is the ſhorteſt which a Tyrant ſends. Never was any Tyrant ſix months in killing any man: A Fever hath often detained men a whole year.* What is it then that we fear?

Quid refert in Equuleum an in lectulum torquendus aſcendaris? Petrarch. Arrian. Epictet. l.2.c.6.

Is

Is it the Sword of an Enemy? But are we ſure we ſhall die an eaſier death? Perhaps this Sword may may reſcue us from greater pains and miſeries. *When once I had learnt* (ſays the ſame Philoſopher) *that he that is born muſt alſo die. I am indifferent whether I die by a Fever, or the fall of a Tile, or I be killed by a Souldier: But if I muſt compare, I know that a Souldier will deſtroy me with the leaſt pain.* It is very inconſiderable, ſince we muſt die, after what manner we do it. And if there be any difference, perhaps this way of dying by a Tyrant may be the gentler. Arrian. l. 4. c. 7.

4. That the life which we part with, when we die for our Religion, is not worth the keeping upon thoſe terms, upon which alone we have the liberty to preſerve it. Life, I grant, is a very valuable thing; Eſpecially the life of a man: But let us conſider a while what that is that makes it ſo: It is not becauſe it gives us the

opportunity of eating and drinking, and ſporting our ſelves in the World. This is the life of a Brute, and not the life of a man, much leſs of a worſhipper of God. But our life is deſirable as it relates to a better life, and it ſerves the purpoſes of Eternity. They are the cauſes or ends of life which make it deſirable. So long as they continue, life is not only a bleſſing, but a moſt unſpeakable one. The great ends of life are the ſervice of God, and doing good to one another, in order to a future glory and immortality. It is here we lay a foundation for a future bliſs and happineſs. This life is the Stage on which we act our parts well: This is the ſtate of trial, and this life is very valuable conſidered with its reference and ſubordination to that glory which we expect hereafter. We know there is a reward for the righteous, and out of reſpect to that it is that we ſtrive to abound in all the fruits of righteouſ-

righteouſneſs, and perfect holineſs in the fear of God. Whiles our life ſerves ſo great an end it is worth the preſerving, but without this it is nothing worth. For barely to live is not the happineſs and perfection of a man. If then it come to this, that we muſt loſe our life, or proſtitute our Conſciences, and deny the faith, our life is not worth the keeping upon theſe hard terms. For when the end of life is gone, what is life it ſelf but a burden and reproach to him that hath it?

In other things we judge thus. We value things by their end and uſefulneſs. And when they are rendred unfit for their end, we value them not any longer. Who regards any thing any farther than as it anſwers its end? Who regards an unfruitful and dry Vine or Fig-tree; Who values adulterate Coin, or uſeleſs Beaſts? It is the end and uſefulneſs of things that ſets a rate and price upon

them. We reject those things that are useless as we do Salt that hath lost its savour.

But nothing is more vile and contemptible than our life when it is deprived of its end. A man that hath Shipwracked his Faith, and prostituted his Conscience to save his goods and his life is of all Creatures in this lower world the most deplorably miserable. He lives indeed, but he is an uneasie burden to himself, and a cumber to the Earth. He lives, but his life is nothing worth when he is bereft of his integrity, and hath forfeited his future hopes. Life is not worth any mans keeping upon such terms as these are. *Socrates* told the *Athenians*, that if they would offer him his life upon condition that he should no longer Philosophize, he would thank them indeed, but not accept of life upon those terms; And adds, *that he would rather obey God than them.* Hence it was that the first Christians

Plat. Ap. Socr.

ſtians would rather die than do that which was evil. And ſome of the honeſter Heathens did thus alſo. *Priſcus Helvidius* was a Senator of *Rome*, and conſidered the duty of his place. The Emperour ſent to him, and forbid him to come into the Senate: *Priſcus* told him, It was in his power to remove him from being a Senator, till that was done he would go into the Senate: Then the Emperour commanded him, if went into the Senate, to hold his peace: But *Priſcus* told him, that he would ſpeak what he thought was juſt and right.: But *Priſcus* added, *If you ſay you will kill me, when did I affirm that I was immortal? Do you your part, I will do mine: It is your part to kill: It is mine to die undauntedly. It is your part to baniſh, it is mine to go away without grief.* Our life is worth preſerving, but not with the loſs of our integrity. It is its end and its relation to a future ſtate that gives it value. Arrian. Epict. l. 1. c. 8.

3. Let us consider the ground or reason of this command of our Lord. The truth is our Lords will in this case ought to be ground enough to us. It should be enough that our Lord hath said it; it will not become us to dispute our Saviours Law. But yet our Saviour deals with us with great condescension, he does not govern us after an arbitrary manner. His Laws are founded upon Justice, and do carry with them a great conviction that they are just and reasonable. And as it is thus every where else, so it is in the matter that lies before us. Our Lord requires us to part with our lives, but it is upon a good account that he requires it. And we cannot but judge this very reasonable when it is considered, that, when our Lord requires this, he does it only then when by our obedience we are assured to avoid a greater evil than what we suffer, and to attain a greater good than we forego.

By

By our obedience to this Law we are ſure to avoid a greater evil than that is which we ſuffer. And this will be evident if we will but take the pains to conſider what it is we ſuffer; and what evils we avoid by it. For our ſuffering it can amount to no more than the loſs of this preſent life: This is the utmoſt that we can ſuffer. No force or malice can reach any farther than this comes to. Let us make the moſt of it, it will not be much we loſe. And whatever evil the loſs of this life is, yet it holds no proportion at all to the evils, which by this means we avoid; And they are theſe two:

1. We avoid the horrors and clamours of an accuſing Conſcience. Say that we decline our *ſuffering*, and deny our *Religion*; that to *avoid death* we *wrong* our *Conſcience*: Do not think your trouble is now at an end when you have taken this courſe, and that you ſhall live pleaſant days for the future.

This

Amos 5. 19. This is but *as if a man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him; Or went into the house and leaned his hand on the Wall, and a Serpent bit him:* Alas poor man, thou dost but run from one evil into another, and, which is the saddest, from the *least* into the *greatest*: From *bodily pain*, into the *horrors* of a *guilty* mind. And sure I am there is no compare between the one and the other. There is no sorrow like that of a wounded Spirit. Others may be avoided, or they may be cured, they may be diverted, and they have been born: But a wounded spirit who can bear? This is an evil from within, a perpetual disquiet at home. The other evils are but foreign, and from without. There is no plague like that of the heart. All other strokes they do but batter the out-works, this throws down the main Fort. Greater madness cannot be than to wrong our Consciences that we may save our lives; To wound our

Souls

Souls that we may keep our *Skin* intire. This is to regard the Garment more than we do what it covers. What is it that bewitches us? Can we meet with any evil in this world to be compared with the guilt and horrors of our own minds? Will any thing comfort us when our own minds upbraid us? Will any thing be able to hold us up when our hearts ſink within us? Surely, all other ſorrows are very trifling things to this one ſorrow of a guilty and ~~un~~awakened mind. For *an* we find that it is this that makes our other ſorrows ſharp and poinant; it is this that gives them a keen edge, and makes them pierce deep. Guilt renders even our outward Croſſes and ſorrows double. It is this that preſſes and weighs us down under our other burdens. We run into a greater evil than we run from, when to eſcape a ſuffering we commit a ſin. We do but divert the blow from our body, and receive the deadly ſtroke upon

on our ſouls. For ſure I am that Fire and Faggot, Wheels and Gibbets, all the Inſtruments of cruelty and death are very gentle Evils to the horrors and laſhes of a guilty and accuſing Conſcience. But then,

2. We avoid by this means an eternal and unſpeakable miſery: The flames of Hell, I mean, which opens its mouth to receive thoſe profane ſinners that chooſe that everlaſting burning before the ſufferings of this preſent life. What proportion is there now between a Temporal and an Eternal death? Between the ſorrows of this preſent time and thoſe everlaſting ſorrows; Is there any burning to be compared to that fire which never goes out? Any Dungeon or Priſon fit to be compared with thoſe chains of darkneſs? Does not that worm that never dies ſpeak infinite more terror than any Croſs or Gibbet, any pain or torment here below? Can we conceive what it is

to die eternally? Is there any evil like unto this? Is any ſentence ſo formidable as that of *Depart from me ye curſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels?* Mat. 25. 41. Certainly the parting of the ſoul from the body is but a ſmall thing to the parting of the ſoul from God the fountain of its being and happineſs. We look upon death as formidable which ſtrips us of our worldly properties, divides us from this body, and from this world, but what is it then to be eternally ſeparated from our God? To depart from God, to depart with a Curſe, to depart into everlaſting fire, to depart into the portion of Devils and apoſtate Fiends is more than can be expreſſed in time.

My God, my God why doſt thou part from me!
Was ſuch a grief as cannot be.

The Son of God cried out when he was for a while deprived of a ſenſe

ſenſe of Gods favour, when he was in that agony which he underwent upon our ſcore. But who can tell, nay, who can think how ſad this will be, when God will be merciful to a man no more? When we die for our Religion, it is that we may not die eternally. When we loſe our life here, it is that we may not die the ſecond death. Having premiſed theſe things, I ſhall now proceed to lay before you the helps and aſſiſtances that our Religion does afford us againſt the ſevereſt trials that we ſhall meet with in our Chriſtian Courſe and Warfare.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

FIrſt, Our Religion lays before us the hope of eternal life for our ſupport under the ſufferings and calamities of this ſhort life. *Rejoyce* (ſays the Apoſtle) *in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, that when his glory ſhall be revealed ye may be glad alſo with exceeding joy.* I ſhall take the liberty to enlarge ſomewhat upon this Theme, and conſider: 1. The greatneſs of the reward; 2. The clearneſs of its revelation; 3. And the fitneſs of it to work upon us. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

1. The greatneſs of the reward. Here is enough to make us happy amidſt all the evils of this world. *Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil* Mat. 5. 10, 11.

evil againſt you falſely for my ſake. Here is that which will enable us not to endure only with patience, but to rejoice alſo, if it be duly conſidered.

But it is certain that Eternal life is a vaſt and wide Ocean, a boundleſs Theme that it will not be eaſie to ſpeak of as we ſhould, who know but in part, and ſee through a glaſs darkly. Howbeit I ſhall ſay ſomething, and leave very much more to be underſtood.

It is called in the Scriptures a *Reſt*, or *Sabbatiſm*, and that expreſſion does both tell us what Heaven, and what this life is. That this life is, a life of toil and labour, the burden, and back part of the Week; Juſt as of old the firſt days of the week were, days of labour and work. The other life is the everlaſting Sabbath which does relieve and deliver us from our toil, and refreſh us after our pain and toil. We are here ſollicited by our fears, bowed down with ſorrow,

Heb. 4. 9.

ſorrow, worn with labour, pained with ſickneſs, affrighted with evil tidings, and with the apprehenſions of death. We are much afflicted with the malice and power of evil men, and not ſuffered to be at reſt. *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, there the weary be at reſt. There the Priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the Oppreſſor.*

This is a ſtate of Change and great Viciſſitude, and when things go well with us, we are not ſecure, they will continue in that poſture. The Clouds of a ſudden gather together after the cleareſt Shine. And the moſt ſetled courſe of things in this world, is yet full of change and variety. When things are as we would have them, they do not long continue ſo; ſomething or other ariſes that diſturbs the order of things, or at leaſt ruffles the calme of our minds. The dark night ſends away the brightneſs of the day, and caſts a black Mantle

over the gaiety that entertained us. The delights of the Spring are removed by the heat of Summer; and a keen and ſharp Winter robs us again of the pleaſure of a more open ſeaſon. Thus it is here below: We are entertained with various things; and we are ſoon ſtripped of that pleaſure which we embraced with the greateſt welcom. In the firſt days of the Week (in the Book of *Geneſis*) It is conſtantly ſaid, for ſix days together, that the Evening and the Morning was ſuch and ſuch a day. But when we come to the ſeventh day we read no ſuch thing: It is
Gen. 2. 3. ſaid, that God bleſſed the *ſeventh day* and *ſanctified it*. This gives us a fair repreſentation of this, and the other life. This life is the burden of the Week, it hath its Evening as well as its Morning: The life to come is all alike. There is no Evening there that ſhall remove the light from the place where
Rev. 22. 5. God dwels. *There ſhall be no night there,*

there, and they need no Candle, neither light of the Sun: For the Lord giveth them light.

This one conſideration does greatly recommend to us the happineſs of a future ſtate, *viz.* that it is a ſtate of reſt. To think that we ſhall be out of the reach of power and malice, that all our labour, our toil, and care is at an end. That we ſhall no more be harraſſed and diſturbed by the evils of life.

But this is not all that recommends to us a future ſtate. It is repreſented to us in the Holy Scriptures as a ſtate of great joy and pleaſure: And it is conſequently expreſſed by ſuch terms as do import no leſs, and ſuch as do imply more than can be expreſſed or underſtood. Thus it is ſometimes expreſſed by a Kingdom, or a Crown, by a Feaſt, and by Pleaſures, but then we are aſſured that it amounts to more than all theſe things ſpeak, and that it is beyond what eye hath

ſeen, or ear heard, or what hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. It is indeed a Crown, a Kingdom, a Feaſt, and it is much more than all this: It is the beſt of all this, and more than this. It is a Kingdom without Cares, a Crown without a Croſs, a Feaſt without Satiety. It is called by theſe little names becauſe theſe are the greateſt things which this lower world hath. Theſe words among us ſound high, they ſpeak power and honour, plenty and pleaſure, and what the world calls good, and therefore Heaven is repreſented by ſuch things which we underſtand and regard. But then theſe are but low and ſhort repreſentations of the things themſelves. Such Images of heaven as the Tabernacle and Temple among the Jews were of this and the other World, or of Earth and Heaven. They were Images in little, but came greatly ſhort of what they repreſented. For as Hell is

repreſented

repreſented in the Scripture-ſtyle by Fire, and by Darkneſs, and by the Valley of *Hinnom*, which were things in themſelves very ſad, and things that were eaſily underſtood, but yet far ſhort of what they repreſent: So is Heaven repreſented to us by the beſt things below, but theſe things come infinitely ſhort of that which they repreſent.

At other times we find our future happineſs otherwiſe expreſſed, by being with the Lord, by ſeeing of God, by knowing as we are known, and being like our Lord. Theſe are expreſſions that are very big indeed, but ſtill they import more than we are able in this ſtate fully to comprehend: They imply the greateſt perfection that our natures are capable of, and that our imperfections ſhall be quite taken away. We are mightily ſtruck and affected with ſeeing what we had but heard of, we are ſtrangely

pleaſed with apprehending a thing clearly which we knew not, or knew but imperfectly before. We are greatly taken with the company of our deareſt friends, and by our approving our ſelves to the vertuous and the good: And therefore Heaven is repreſented to us in terms that ſpeak the greateſt and moſt rational ſatisfaction. But then ſtill we live in houſes of clay, we are dull of conceiving, and clogg'd with our fleſh. And theſe things are ſpiritually diſcerned, and to apprehend them to good purpoſe we muſt be greatly abſtracted from the body, ſubdued to the world, and weaned from our ſenſualities. And when we are ſo in great meaſure, we ſhall be mightily affected with theſe things.

Eſpecially, when we remember that in that eſtate we ſhall be perfect men: That our weakneſs and our folly ſhall be taken away, and all that which hinders and indiſpoſes us in this lower World ſhall be

be taken out of the way. Our Underſtandings ſhall then be clear, and we ſhall no more be troubled with the fumes and miſts that now are before our eyes. We ſhall judge no longer by falſe Rules and Meaſures; we ſhall not be blinded by prejudice and prepoſſeſſion, by paſſion, and by ſecular reſpects: We that now know as Children do, ſhall then know clearly, and as we are known. And then our Wills, that are now crooked, and perverſe, and in great meaſure unreſigned, (which is the ſource of our trouble in this life) ſhall be rectified, and ſwallowed up into the Divine Will. Our Paſſions ſhall no longer diſturb and blind us, but we ſhall be perfected and completed, throughly refined, and purified, and perfectly reliſh the Joys of a future ſtate, which as much ſurpaſs all the good things of this World as the Heavens ſurpaſs this lump of Earth we tread on.

After all this it must be remembred that that state shall abide for Ever. We shall there for Ever be with the Lord. Our Kingdom shall have no end, nor shall our Crown fade away. We shall not know what the infirmities of Age, and what the fears of Death mean. There will be an eternal Day without a succeeding Night; a Shine without fear of Clouds or Tempest; a perpetual Triumph without mixture and Allay. This gives an unspeakable weight to that Crown of glory, and it will not now sit uneasily upon our heads, we not being burdened with the anxious thoughts of death and a future reckoning.

2. I consider the clearness of the Revelation of this Eternal life. For this is a Consideration of great moment in the case that lies before us. For had not the revelation been clear, the thing it self could not have wrought very powerfully upon us.

The

The heathen world wanted this diſcovery to animate them to worthy actions. And for the Jews, we read nothing in the five Books of *Moſes*, of Eternal life. I do not deny but that devout and holy men amongſt them, had about them an expectation of a future Bliſs: Nay more, I make no doubt they had alſo among them ſome ſhadows, and obſcure Images of this Bleſſed State. But then as this was not on Gods part any expreſs Promiſe, ſo it is certain that they had but very obſcure notices of this happineſs. But thanks be to God the caſe is better with us: Our Lord hath *aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel.* We have it now clearly and openly revealed, and have by the Religion of Jeſus Chriſt received the utmoſt aſſurance of it. It is not now obſcured under Types and Veils, under the wealth and plenty of a Land that flowed with Milk and Honey, but it is now revealed 2 Tim. 1. 10.

revealed clearly, and our Lord hath given us the utmoſt aſſurance that we could deſire in the caſe.

He hath not only taught us this Doctrine, but confirmed it to us by many Miracles, and particularly by his own Reſurrection from the dead; and after that he himſelf aſcended into Heaven, in the ſight of his Diſciples. What ſhall we ſay now? Can we forbear to uſe the Apoſtles words? *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope* (or to the hope of life, as one Greek Copy hath it) *by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead; to an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for you.* We are now begotten to the hope of life and immortality. The Bleſſed Tidings thereof was brought us from heaven by the Son of God, and he confirmed what

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

what he ſaid by Miracles that were unqueſtionable; and to give us the greateſt aſſurance, he did himſelf riſe out of the Grave, and aſcended thither viſibly. What is there wanting now to confirm our faith, if we do but credit the very Hiſtory of the Goſpel? That tells us the many wonders that Chriſt did, even beſides what are written, and that theſe are written that we might believe that *Jeſus is the Chriſt, and that believing, we might have life* (or, as one Greek Copy hath it, eternal life) *through his name.* Joh. 20. 31.

3. I conſider how fit this hope of Eternal life is to work upon us, and to render us patient and conſtant under the ſufferings which meet us in our way to Heaven. Surely, the Apoſtle judged ſo when he ſaid, *Rejoyce, inaſmuch as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings, that when his glory ſhall be revealed, ye may be glad alſo with exceeding joy.* It will have a mighty force 1 Pet. 4. 13.

upon

upon us, if we be not much want-
2 Cor. 4. 16. ing. *For which cauſe we faint not— while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen: for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal.*

There is enough in the thing it ſelf to ſupport us: And if it do it not, it is becauſe we do not believe it, or do not keep our eye fixt upon it. For we find that the hope of other things incomparably leſs, hath a mighty force and influence upon us. Out of the faint hope of Riches we endure labours and Watchings; we patiently dig into the bowels of the earth, and adventure our lives upon the uncertain Seas; we deny ſleep to our eyes, and ſlumber to our eye-lids. We are content to endure repulſes, and diſappointments, that we may get preferment, and enjoy our pleaſure afterward. We keep ſomething in our eye that ſupports us under our pain and labour of life.

And

And yet these things we have not that assurance of success; nor yet, if we had, can we have any certainty that we shall long enjoy what we so vehemently pursue. Besides, all the mean while we do but grasp at a shadow, and court a trifle.

Let us then be perswaded to keep our eyes fixt upon our Reward, and we shall find our selves much at ease under the labours and sufferings of this life. Let us raise up our wearied hearts and eyes to that state of Rest and Bliss into which our Lord is entred, to prepare a place for us. If we think of the good Land we are going to possess, we shall support our selves under the labours of a barren Wilderness. And if our hearts be but throughly set on Heaven, we shall not greatly complain of the roughness of the way to it. The hopes of a Child to be born into the world reconciles the, otherwise fearful, Mother to the pains of her Travail.

What

What will not then the hope of Eternal glory be able to do? We are here but forming a new for a more bleſſed ſtate of things: We hope to be brought forth ere long into a ſtate of liberty and joy. Let us think of this, and we ſhall not be caſt down at our painin our paſſage thither. Let us under our Throws and pain look up to that immortality for the ſake of which we ſuffer. Think of Eternity; He that apprehends that, will not be diſmayed at force, nor terrified with the inſtruments of Cruelty. Let it never be ſaid, the hope of Riches and Honour here, hath more force than the hopes of Heaven; That other men ſhall do and ſuffer more for earthly, than we do for heavenly things: That Temporal hopes can effect that which the hope of Eternals cannot do.

In alium ſumimur partum. Sen. Ep. 102.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

SEcondly, Our Religion gives us the utmoſt aſſurance of Gods gracious and particular care and Providence; and being aſſured of this, we are provided with another great ſupport under all the Evils of this preſent life.

Theſe two things have a mighty force to quiet us when they are duly conſidered. The hope of Heaven hereafter, and the aſſurance of Gods care and ſpecial Providence here. If our hope lies beyond this World, and we be in the mean time aſſured that God rules among men, there is nothing that can afflict us greatly.

If we have no greater deſign about us, than that we may be happy with God in a future life; we ſhall not be much caſt down at the troubles of this preſent ſtate.

For

For these troubles will be so far from hindring our attainment of that great end, that they rather advance us and set us forward. Death it self, which is the extremest Evil, does but put us into the possession of our eternal rest. And whatever Storm or Tempest befalls us, we ought to welcom it when it drives us nearer to our desired Haven.

But let us in the next place consider the support which we have from that assurance which our Religion gives us of Gods special care and Providence. If we live under a lively sense of this truth, we shall be in great measure rid of our anxious cares and troubles. For now though we should be tossed upon a Tempestuous Sea, and the Keel wherein we are should be in in danger from the proud and swelling Waves, yet we may rest securely when we remember who sits at Stern: And here,

First, I ſhall lay before you the aſſurance our Religion gives us of Gods care and ſpecial Providence.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew you how potent an argument this is toward our ſupport.

Thirdly, I ſhall make ſome application of it.

1. I ſhall lay before you the aſſurance our Religion gives us of Gods care and ſpecial Providence. By his ſpecial care and Providence I mean his care of Men, and eſpecially of his Church.

I might here put you in mind of what God did of old for his Church and People before the coming of the Meſſiah. The Holy Scriptures of the Old Teſtament will afford you many inſtances of Gods ſpecial care of the Jewiſh people, whom he had choſen out of all the Nations of the World. He ruled among them, and though he appointed Governours over them, yet was he

their great Lord and King. And indeed their form of Government was a peculiar one. For it is, not without cauſe, by one of the Ancients called a *Theocraſie:* God was their King, from him they had their *Laws*, their *Defence*, and *Protection*. And God gave that People very many, and very great Demonſtrations of his ſpecial care of them. He dwelt among them, they were under his Wings. And were of all people in the world the moſt happy while they continued obedient unto God. I ſhould be endleſs if I ſhould go about to reckon up what proofs God gave of his great care of that Church, and of his eſpecial Providence over it. He ſhewed it by Miracles of Mercy, by Wonders of Love, by moſt ſingular and remarkable deliverances which he wrought for them.

In due time God ſent his Son into the World, and after that, as he inlarged his Church and People, ſo

ſo he continued his care of them too. And by his Son he hath given us farther aſſurance of his very particular care and Providence. And the Son of God did in his Sermons and Diſcourſes aſſure his followers of this truth; And by that means did prepare them for ſuffering, and diſpoſe them to patience and contentedneſs, and to an unſhaken and ſteady faith in God, under all events of things. By this courſe our Lord would deliver us from thoſe cares and anxieties, from thoſe fears and diſtractions that render this life the greateſt burden to us. And becauſe we are apt to be mightily concerned for the neceſſaries of this life, and very apt to be afraid of Death, eſpecially of a violent and unnatural one, therefore we find our Lord fortifying us againſt theſe evils, and that he does by giving us a full aſſurance of the ſpecial care and good Providence of God. For this (as I ſhall ſhew afterward) is

a moſt powerful conſideration to render us quiet and contented, and to rid us of our diſtracting cares, and thoſe fears that make this life a burden to us: And to this purpoſe our Saviour diſcourſes moſt divinely in his Sermon on the Mount; a conſiderable part of which incomparable Sermon was ſpent in this Argument: And it tends directly to free us of that anxiety and care which is the great burden of our lives. But I had rather you ſhould hear the words themſelves which our bleſſed Lord ſpake. And theſe they are: *Therefore, I ſay unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink: Nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on: Is not the life more than Meat, and the body than Raiment? Behold the Fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one Cubit*

Mat. 6. 25. to Ver. 33.

Ver. 26.

Ver. 27.

Cubit unto his Stature? And why Ver. 28.
take ye thought for raiment: Conſider
the Lillies of the field how they grow;
they toil not, neither do they ſpin.
And yet I ſay unto you, that even Ver. 29.
Solomon in all his glory was not
arrayed like one of theſe. Wherefore Ver. 30.
if God ſo cloath the graſs of the field,
which to day is, and to morrow is caſt
into the Oven, ſhall he not much more
cloath you, O ye of little faith?
Therefore take no thought, ſaying, Ver. 31.
What ſhall we eat? Or what ſhall we
drink? Or wherewithal ſhall we be
cloathed? (For after all theſe things Ver. 32.
do the Gentiles ſeek) for your hea-
venly Father knoweth that ye have
need of all theſe things.

Can any thing be more effectual to rid us of our anxious and uneaſie thoughts, than theſe Arguments which our Lord has laid before us? Shew me any Philoſopher that ever diſcourſed at this powerful rate. Theſe words are very divine, and mightily fitted to gain their end. They are words

that couch under them very great Arguments to move us by. If God have given us life (which nothing but his kindneſs could move him to do) we need not doubt of meat to preſerve that life. He that hath given us a body that needs cloathing, will ſurely give us ſomething to cloath it withal. The Fowls are fed, that can neither ſow nor reap, nor do they gather into Barns; and ſhall we diſtruſt? Our anxiety is burdenſom indeed, but it does not advance us: It neither feeds nor cloaths us. God cloaths the flowers and Lillies of the field (which are not capable of care and anxiety) and that after a more gay manner than what any Monarch, even *Solomon* himſelf, was clothed. And if the graſs of the field, which was not deſigned for any long continuance, be thus beautified by God, ſhall we fear nakedneſs? Theſe cares may better become the Heathens (who had but a ſlender belief of God's

God's ſpecial Providence) they become us not, who do profeſs a belief that God knows what our needs are. Theſe are the powerful Arguments that our Lord lays before us. And can there be any thing more convincing than what our Saviour hath ſaid? Can any thing be more effectual to rid us of our troubleſom cares for ever? Can any thing be added to this Diſcourſe? If there may, it is that ſurely which our Lord himſelf has added in the next words: *But ſeek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: For the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelf: Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* If we will be careful, let us take care to do the Will of God: Let us do our part, and God will take care of us. We ſhall have enough to do with our preſent work, let us leave futurities to him Mat. 6. 33, 34.

that is only wiſe and good.

But perhaps it is the leaſt of our care what we ſhall eat and drink, and wherewith we ſhall be cloathed: We are careful about greater matters than theſe are: And that is the ſmalleſt of our care what proviſion we ſhall make for our bodies: We are full of thoughts how we ſhall be able to ſuffer perſecution, and continue conſtant to the death: We may be brought before the great men of the World, and how ſhall we do then for Wiſdom and Courage? We may be delivered up into the hands of powerful men; What ſhall we then do? Our Lord does not leave us in that caſe. *When they deliver you up* (ſays he) *take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak: For it ſhall be given you in that ſame hour what ye ſhall ſpeak.* It will be enough that we have help when we need it: We ought to conſider that we ſhall not be forgotten by God: That nothing

Mat. 10. 19.

ſhall

ſhall happen to us without his knowledge and permiſſion. *Are not two Sparrows ſold for a farthing? And one of them ſhall not fall on the ground without your Father: But the very hairs of your head are all numbred. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many Sparrows.* Theſe words give us aſſurance of the very particular care and Providence of God, and therein the greateſt ſupport under all our afflictions that is imaginable. The World was greatly in the dark in the queſtion of Gods Providence, and there were great and foul errors crept into the World concerning it. Thus *Epicurus* is ſaid to have denied the Providence of God altogether; *Ariſtotle*, to have confined it to the Heavens; Some of the Arabians to have reſtrained it to Univerſals only; and ſome of the Jews to have limited it to Mankind, and not extended it unto Beaſts. Nay, ſome of the Jews were narrower ſtill, and would needs

Ver. 29, 30, 31.

Vid. Jacchiad in Dan. 7. 3. cum Annot. L. Empir. v. Abraven. on Exod. 23. 20.

needs confine the Providence of God to the Jewish Land or Nation only, who were Gods Portion and Lot. But our blessed Saviour does, in the words above-named, assure us that Gods care is not to be bounded and restrained. And thus though he be not equally concerned for all his Creatures, yet they are all a part of his care: And he hath not only a general care of Mankind, but a care of the Individuals also, and a very special and particular care of his Worshippers and Followers. Nay, the very Beasts themselves are part of his care; and not only Oxen, Beasts of great labour and usefulness, but the smallest fowls of the air, even the Sparrows, those cheap and inconsiderable ones. Nor is God only concerned for the life of a man: Our Saviour descends lower, when he says, *The very hairs of your head are all numbred.*

We are further assured by the Apostle that God careth for us, and

and that therefore we ought to caſt all our *Care*) or *burden*, as it is in the Pſalmiſt, to which theſe words ſeem to refer) upon him. But then he would have us caſt *all our care* upon him. Not only our care for meat and drink, *&c.* Our care for *our ſelves*, but our care for our Friends and our Relatives; Our care for *future Events* and *Contingencies*. Be *careful for nothing*, ſays another Apoſtle; And elſewhere he tells them to whom he writes, that he would have them be *without carefulneſs*, and that they might *attend upon the Lord without diſtraction*. That is, we muſt from the conſideration of Gods ſpecial Providence diſcharge our ſelves of all our tormenting and diſquieting cares, giving up our ſelves intirely to the will of that God who rules and governs this lower World.

1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 55. 23. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 7. 32. 35.

2. I ſhall now ſhew how powerful an argument this is towards our ſupport. And that it is,

First,

First, As by it we are discharged of our anxiety and disquiet of mind, which, for want of this consideration, afflicts and burdens us. If God govern the World, we may be quiet and still: We have nothing to do but obey his Will, and to submit chearfully to his disposal of things. We are not fit for the government, and well it is for us that we are not concerned. We want Wisdom and Power, and are too shallow and too weak for so great a weight. We have nothing to do now but Adore the Divine Wisdom and Goodness, and to follow God. It is well for us that we are discharged from a burden which neither we nor our Fathers were ever able to bear. *The Lord reigneth. let the Earth rejoyce, let the multitude of Isles be glad thereof.*

Psal. 97. 1.

Secondly, As by this Doctrine we receive assurance that all things will be well administred, and tend to a good account at last. We shall not

not now need to fear: We need not diſquiet our ſelves with the things that happen, as if they came to paſs by chance, or an inevitable fate. God governs the World: And it is well for us that ſo it is. We are ſafer much in his hands than in our own, and dearer we are to him than to our ſelves: We rejoyce under the Government of a wiſe and good King. We have greater cauſe to rejoyce in this, that God reigns. And that if we conſider his infinite Wiſdom, his Goodneſs and Almighty Power.

His Wiſdom aſſures that he will do what is beſt. And we are not fit Judges of that: We are not able to ſee into the ſecrets of Government: It is enough to us that God is infinitely wiſe, and ſo not only knows what is beſt, but what is beſt for us, and what is the fitteſt time of helping us.

But then his Goodneſs, and Holineſs give us a full aſſurance that he will not let them that are truly

truly good, and ſuffer upon that account, loſe their reward; That he will not govern Arbitrarily, but will do good to them that are good.

And ſince his Power is infinite alſo, we are ſecure that he will not be defeated in bringing his own Counſels to paſs. And therefore the holy and pious ſoul gives it ſelf up intirely unto Gods diſpoſal; being well aſſured of Gods good will to him, and knowing well that his infinite Wiſdom cannot be deceived, nor his Almighty Power defeated.

3. I ſhall make ſome Application of this: And that I ſhall do in the following Particulars.

Firſt, This may ſerve to reprove our murmuring and impatience under the evils which we meet with here below. We complain bitterly under our ſeveral troubles and afflictions, not conſidering the hand that lays them on us. We do not, as we ought, when we are diſtreſſed,

diſtreſſed, look up with great reverence to our Creator; but we curſe our Stars, or we are angry with our Brother, who is the immediate Inſtrument of our trouble; or we impute our miſery to our inadvertence, and do diſquiet our ſelves in vain. If our Child or Friend die, we accuſe the Phyſician, or our ſelves: If we ſuffer in our Goods, we quarrel with our Servants, or are angry at the Times. In a word, we are uneaſie and reſtleſs, not conſidering that God governs the World, and that the very hairs of our head are numbred. Our Friend did not die without Gods knowledge; Our Goods were not loſt without his regard; And who are we that we ſhould murmur and complain, and ſay unto God, What doſt thou? If God govern the World, we may well be ſhamed to repine and murmur. If he diſpoſeth things below, we ſhall be very blameable if we murmur at our own Lot and Portion.

Secondly,

Secondly, Hence we may be ſeaſonably exhorted to acknowledge this great truth by a ſuitable life and converſation. It is a great influence which this belief ought to have upon us; It ought to render us contented with our Lot and Portion of things; To endue us with courage to encounter difficulties; It ought to quicken us in our devotions; Let us not faint under the ſorrows that overtake us. If God govern the World, we ought quietly to commit our cauſe to him, and not go about to wreſt the Government out of his hand. It becomes greatly to truſt in him at all times, and not to let go our Faith and our Hope whatever troubles befall us in this mortal life. *The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus, after that ye have ſuffered a while, make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you: To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

1 Pet. 5. 10, 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

OUr Religion does assure us of the power and presence of the holy Spirit of God under our sufferings for righteousness sake, and this is another great support which the sincere disciples of Christ are furnished with. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you* — It is worth our observing by the way, that this Spirit is in this place represented to us under the Character of the *Spirit of glory*, and that very fitly also when the Apostle assures those men of this divine assistance who are *reproached* for the name of Christ. The Spirit of *glory* will sufficiently support good men under the *reproach* and scorn they meet withal. There is a certain Greek Copy that hath it, the Spirit of *glory and of power*; 1 Pet. 4. 14. Δόξης καὶ δυνάμεως. vid. N. T. Edit. Curcellæi.

power; I ſhall not need to contend for that reading, being well aſſured, that he who receives the Divine Spirit, receives the Spirit of power alſo, as I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew you afterwards; It is to be obſerved, that the Apoſtle aſſures them to whom he writes, that this Holy Spirit, whom he calls the Spirit of *glory* and of *God*, ſhall *reſt* upon them. He ſhall not only give them a viſit in their ſorrows, and ſo leave them, but he ſhall ſtay and abide with them. And this agrees with what our bleſſed Saviour promiſed. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth*, &c.

Joh. 14. 16, 17.

But for my more orderly ſpeaking to this matter, I ſhall

Firſt, Shew you the ſufficiency of this divine aſſiſtance.

Secondly, I ſhall lay before you the great aſſurance which we have, that we ſhall receive this heavenly aid.

Third-

Thirdly, The condition on our part required for the obtaining this assistance.

Fourthly, The Application of it.

1. I shall shew you the sufficiency of this Divine assistance which God hath made us the Promise of: We shall have great cause to believe that our help will bear proportion to our work, and that whatever is laid upon us does not exceed the proportion of the strength which we receive to bear it. And then we shall have no cause to find fault of our Master, or of our work when our *help* bears proportion to our *work* and duty. Now we need more than an ordinary help in these two Cases.

First, To enable us against persecutions for the sake of our Religion.

Secondly, To support and comfort us under our losses and other afflictions which we shall meet with in this present life. I shall

therefore ſhew you that the Spirit of God will afford ſufficient help in both theſe caſes.

1. We need more than ordinary aſſiſtance to enable us againſt perſecutions for the ſake of our Religion. The Chriſtian hath as quick a ſenſe of pain as other men, his Religion does not deſtroy his fleſh and bloud, and change it into Braſs: He is as apprehenſive and as ſenſible of the evils of life as any other man is: And beſides that, he is is by his Profeſſion expoſed to all the miſeries of humane life; To cold, and nakedneſs; To hunger and thirſt; To ſcorn and reproach; To ſtripes and to buffetings; To Wheels and Racks; to reſtraint, and to death ~~death~~ it ſelf. It were not an eaſie thing to recount the very many miſeries with which holy men have been perſecuted: Apoſtles and Prophets, wiſe and holy men, men of whom this World was not worthy; have been ſawn aſunder, ſtretched

Heb. 12. 11.

ſtretched upon the Rack, tormented on the Wheel, expoſed upon Gibbets, torn apieces by violence, roſted upon the fire, and taken off by death that hath been not only violent, but mercileſs. Now theſe trials require a mighty aid, and no leſs than an heavenly and a divine aſſiſtance. It is an eaſie thing for us to deſpiſe the danger that is at a diſtance; To ſpeak big words when we know the Enemy is afar off; To profeſs that we will rather die for Jeſus than we will deny him. Our Lord hath many ſuch forward Diſciples as theſe, who give him their word that they will not forſake him, and yet for all their good words they deny him in a time of danger. And indeed ſo it is, that we ſhall then need a great aſſiſtance: Nor can we tell how ſoon we may be put to the trial. It is, much for our Intereſt to diſcern whence our ſtrength is to be expected.

The Holy Spirit is able to ſtrengthen us to undergo undantedly all theſe evils. And no aid leſs than that of the Holy Spirit would be ſufficient. It muſt be a power from above, an help from God that can enable us to ſtand up againſt all the Wit and Malice, the Craft and the Cruelty of men and Devils. Indeed we are very apt to deſpond, and our hearts fail within us: We fear we ſhall never hold out under great pains and torments, and we do much diſquiet our ſelves about it. But here is an help at hand, and we ſhall find, that he that is in us is greater than he that is in the world. And this will appear if we conſider the following particulars:

1. That this Spirit is a Spirit of power, and that power is Divine alſo. The Holy Scriptures give us a large and very particular account of this matter; and therein we have a full aſſurance, that by the help of this heavenly aid we may be able

to

to do more than we can think. He that hath this Spirit of God is endued with a mighty power from above, a power that is ſufficient againſt all the powers of darkneſs. When the Virgin asked the Angel (who had told her ſhe ſhould conceive and bring forth a Son) *How ſhall this be, ſeeing I know not a man?* Luk. 1. 35. We find what anſwer he made, viz. *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee* — and then it follows: *For with God nothing ſhall be unpoſſible.* Ver. 37. The Holy Spirit is called the *finger of God*: And the great and mighty works which Jeſus and his followers did, were wrought by this Holy Spirit of God; And theſe works are an irrefragable proof of the mighty power of the Spirit of God. To this purpoſe we read *of the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power.* And where in one place St. *Stephen* is ſaid to be full of the Holy Ghoſt, in the other place he

Luk. 11. 20.

1 Cor. 2. 4.

Act. 6. 5, 8.

is said to be full of Power. He that receives the Spirit receives
2 Tim. 1. 7. Power: *God hath not given us the Spirit of fear, but of Power.* St. *Peter*
1 Pet. 3. 18. says, That *Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* St. *Paul* expresseth the same truth in other words, and that Variety confirms the truth of what I am now asserting; St. *Paul* says,
2 Cor. 13. 4. That *he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.*

Here can be no defect of Power then, where the Holy Spirit is. The mighty works wrought by this divine Spirit sufficiently declare, that no Power is wanting where he does assist. And therefore why should we distrust and despond when we have the promise of this Power from on high? We shall not need to fear even death it self if we be possessed of this heavenly help: *If the Spirit of him that*
Rom. 8. 11. *raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the*

the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

We have juſt cauſe to diſtruſt our ſelves indeed, and we may well ſuppoſe that we cannot be able to ſtand upright; but what ſhall be too hard for us when we have received that Spirit that raiſed Jeſus from the dead? Well may God lay on us what he thinks fit, when he thus aſſiſteth us with his Divine Spirit.

2. This Holy Spirit is promiſed to this end, to help us in theſe ſtraits and neceſſities: *And when they bring you into the Synagogues, and unto Magiſtrates, and Powers, take ye no thought how, or what thing ye ſhall anſwer, or what ye ſhall ſay. For the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you in the ſame hour what ye ought to ſay.* Luk. 12. 11, 12. It is enough, and we ought to think it ſo, that we have this aſſiſtance when we need it, and are to uſe it: And the Apoſtle tells us, that we are happy, even then when we

1 Pet. 4. 14. we are judged moſt miſerable by the World, when we are reproached for Chriſts ſake, becauſe the Spirit of God and of glory reſteth on us: God hath provided well for us under the Goſpel, which is the miniſtration of the Spirit, that he has promiſed a more than ordinary aſſiſtance in caſes that are extraordinary.

3. Beſides, we have ſufficient proof that this heavenly aſſiſtance hath not been wanting to others in theſe difficulties. We have to this purpoſe very great examples of thoſe that were aſſiſted by this holy Spirit in all their ſufferings and perſecutions. They were by the Holy Ghoſt enabled under all that pain and ſuffering which they endured, to glorifie God in the day of Viſitation. And whereas before they were weak and feeble as other men, had the ſame fears and deſpondencies which other men are importuned with, yet when they were

were assisted by this good Spirit of God, they were full of Courage, and undaunted amidst the severest trials which they underwent, We know that St. *Peter*, before the descent of the Holy Ghost, was so fearful, that he denied his Master when he was questioned by a silly maid: But after the Holy Ghost descended, he was bold as a Lion, and durst confess him before all the House of *Israel*. Now those men that were ready to forsake their Lord before, they do not only own him publickly, but they *departed from the presence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

Acts 2.36.

Act. 5.41.

Nor was this Divine and supernatural assistance a Peculiar belonging to the Apostles and first Preachers of Christianity, nor was it limited to those early days of Christianity; It was continued in the Church of Christ, and does still continue according to the Promise of our Lord and Saviour, And hence

Joh. 14. 16.

hence it came to pass that holy Martyrs, and those that have been persecuted for righteousness sake, have been able to persevere in bearing witness to the truth, notwithstanding all the torments which they did endure from their enemies hands. They that were tortured endured with singular patience their Tormentors Cruelties, and wearied out those men who were their Executioners. Nor were they only the Ministers of Religion (who might be supposed to be endued with a greater measure of the Spirit) that endured with undaunted resolution, but the Laypeople also, even Women were able to endure the greatest severities: I should be endless if I should go about to tell what great examples we have in former and later Ages upon record to this purpose.

2. We need a more than ordinary assistance to support and comfort us under the losses and other afflictions

afflictions which we meet with in this preſent life.

The Comforts of this life (what price ſoever we may ſet upon them) are at beſt very uncertain to us; And we very often out-live thoſe bleſſings which rendered this preſent life comfortable to us. We are deprived of the delight of our eyes, and the labour of our hands, and of that which was the joy of our hearts. Our deareſt Friends are ſnatcht away from our Embraces; our Children and our Relatives are taken from us by a ſudden and an unlooked-for death, and we are bereft of the plenty and the ſtore which once we did enjoy, and are left ſolitary, and there is none to comfort us.

In this caſe the devout and pious Chriſtian is of all men in the world the beſt provided for. He hath peace and comfort which the world knows nothing of. And that he hath from the Holy Spirit of God, which he is endued with.

In

In this dry and barren Wilderness he hath his fresh Springs; And after all his losses and his toyl, he has a Comforter that visits him and abides with him for ever. Thus the Promise runs which our Lord made a little before he left the World. *Is.* And a most gracious Promise this to us who live in these houses of clay, and that are far removed from our Country and our Fathers house. We shall be sure to meet with tribulations here, to hear store of evil tidings, and very sad stories of the miseries that befall others, and that threaten us. Thanks be to God for the comforts of the Holy Ghost: It is to be hoped that we shall thereby be so far refreshed and relieved, as to support us under all our other sorrows in our way to Heaven. This Holy Spirit is like the Rock that followed the men of *Israel* in the Desert, and furnished them with water in a dry and thirsty Land: This is that Oyl of gladness that makes

Joh. 14. 16.

makes us rejoyce in the midſt of the ſorrows of this mortal life. The Seal of God, that tells us to whom we do belong, and the Earneſt of our future inheritance, which does aſcertain us of a great reward in Reverſion. And by this means we are upheld by this heavenly Comforter, under ſickneſs and poverty, pain and reproach, confinement, and the fears of death, till we are ſet at liberty, and placed among the Spirits of juſt men made perfect.

2. I ſhall lay before you the great aſſurance, that we ſhall receive this heavenly aid. For we cannot but be throughly convinced that this Promiſe of the Holy Spirit is an exceeding great and precious one. We are next to conſider what great ground we have to expect that this heavenly gift ſhall be beſtowed upon us.

So it is, that if we look down into our own breaſts, we ſhall find our ſelves in ſo ill a caſe, that we

cannot

cannot think them fit Temples for so pure and holy a Being as the Spirit of God. Our Souls are like the Earth when it was without form and void, and darkneſs was upon the face of the Deep. We may ſoon diſcover the need we have of this Divine aſſiſtance to digeſt and put in order, to cheriſh and enlighten this dark and confuſed Chaos. But all this while we have no aſſurance that we ſhall be thus favoured.

But, bleſſed be the name of God, we have great aſſurance that he will ſend his Holy Spirit into our hearts, and not forſake us: And what that aſſurance is, you may take in the following particulars:

1. We have the Promiſe of God, and that to us ought to be enough. God had of old foretold, that in the times of the Meſſias he would pour his holy Spirit plentifully, even upon all fleſh. A Promiſe that was in great meaſure fulfilled at the day of *Pentecoſt*, next after the Aſcenſion

Iſa. 44. 3. Joel 1. 18. Act. 2. 17.

Aſcenſion of the Son of God: He did before that command his Apoſtles, that *they ſhould not depart from Jeruſalem, but wait for the Promiſe of the Father, which*, ſaith he, *ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many days hence.* Our Lord had given them before this a great aſſurance, that this Comforter ſhould come and abide with them for ever. And we need not doubt, but that he that promiſed would make good his word to us. Acts 1. 4, 5.

2. Eſpecially if it be conſidered how neceſſary this Holy Spirit is for the compleating and finiſhing the work of mans Redemption. ~~It~~ It is true, we were redeemed by the bloud of Chriſt, but then we are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and by him enabled to give obedience to his Laws, who is the Author of Eternal Salvation, but it is to them that do obey him. Since God hath given us his Son we need Heb. 5. 9.

no longer doubt but that he will with him give us all things; especially all things needful for life and godliness. We need not doubt of receiving the supports of the Holy Spirit to enable us to profess that truth constantly which the same
Heb. 2. 4. Spirit dictated to holy men, and which was confirmed by Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost. There is no room left for doubting, but that we shall receive this Holy Spirit if we constantly and fervently implore him.

3. Again, our Saviour hath given us the utmost assurance in
Luk. 11. 13. those words where he says, *If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Parents do not use to deny their Children what is needful for them: Nor do they need a positive Law to oblige them to it. There is a Law in their nature does

does direct and determine them in this case: And those Parents that are otherwise evil men, are yet very prone to bestow good things on their Children. Now then who can doubt of Gods readiness to bestow his Holy Spirit upon them that ask him? Earthly Parents are evil, they are so by nature, and more so by custom and a course of sinning: But our heavenly Father is constantly and immutably good, and will not deceive, or deny those that ask him. That love and kindness, and all the degrees of goodness in any Earthly Parents was derived from God, who is infinitely and unalterably good, and will not fail to fulfil the word which he hath spoken, nor can he be deceived or defeated: He hath said it that cannot lie nor repent; He hath promised who is able to do it; And we may as justly disbelieve his Being as distrust his veracity, and doubt of his Propensity and his power. I proceed to

3. The condition required on our part for the obtaining this assistance. And that is a very gentle and easie one. God will *give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.*

Luk. 11. 9, 10.

I do readily grant that we are not heard in all the Petitions which we put up to God: And it is very well for us that so it is. For we should soon destroy our selves if we should obtain that which we sometimes pray for. But then this is to be understood with reference to the things of this life, where the well instructed and modest man is to refer himself to God, who knows what is best for him: In this case the good man prayes that God would give him, and remove from him what he thinks fit. And the very Heathen could teach men this Lesson. But

Δὸς ὁ θέλεις, ἀπὸ λαβὲ ὁ θέλεις. M. Antonin. l. 10.

But then for the caſe before us, God hath declared his Will, and put us upon Praying, and that fervently alſo, for the Holy Spirit: And we have great need of his heavenly aid and aſſiſtance; and now we can have no doubt but that we ſhall be heard, becauſe we are ſure that we pray according to the Will of God. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he heareth us, whatſoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we deſired of him.* And eſpecially may we be aſſured of ſucceſs when we are provided of ſo effectual an Interceſſour as the Son of God; He hath ſaid, *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* And we are certain moreover, that when we pray for the Holy Spirit in the name of Chriſt, we pray for that divine aſſiſtance which our Lord went into heaven

1 Joh. 5. 14, 15.

Joh. 14. 13

to ſend among us. This he told us,
Joh. 16.7. ſaying, *I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: For if I go not away the Conforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will ſend him unto you.* Nay, our Lord aſſures us, that he will hear our Prayers, that he will intercede in this very caſe; ſo that we have here abundant ſecurity that we ſhall receive an anſwer to our Petition. *If ye ſhall ask any thing in my name I will do it* — And preſently he adds, *And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever.* For our other requeſts which we put up for health, or riches, and the good things of this life, our Lord has given us no particular promiſe of his effectual Interceſſion, but he hath done it in this matter, and hath thereby removed our fears and doubts of being heard.

Joh. 14. 14,16.

And ſure if God many times prevent our very Petitions, and give

give us ſome meaſure of the Holy Spirit, even before we ask him, we ſhall then have no cauſe to fear but he will give greater meaſures of this Holy Spirit to them that do ask him.

All our care muſt be that we ask as we ſhould: That we pray for this heavenly aſſiſtance with great fervor and conſtancy; that we cry mightily unto God; and that we greatly humble our ſoules before him: That we addreſs to him with hunger and thirſt and reſtleſs importunity; that we ſeek as for Silver, and ſearch as for fine Gold: That we vehemently deſire what we pray for, and thirſt as the parched earth does for ſhowers from heaven: That we ſtrive mightily in our Prayers to God, and ſend up many ſtrong cries: That we pierce the Heavens with our cries, and that we put forth all our ſtrength: That we employ all the powers that we have received, and ſummon up all that is

within us to call down this heavenly aid: That we cheriſh and improve the meaſures of the Spirit which we have received, and be greatly cautious that we do not by a careleſs and a trifling, a profane and worldly temper grieve this Holy Spirit, and ſend away this divine and heavenly Comforter. That we do not ſeek our comfort elſewhere, and oppoſe the divine aſſiſtance by our ſelf-will and our inordinate affections.

4. I proceed now to make ſome Application of what hath been ſaid. And

1. This ſpeaks very much to the comfort of the weak and the fearful, at leaſt to all among them that are ſincerely good, and do deſire greatly to become better. Here is an help at hand that is ſufficient, and we need not now be caſt down. I ſhall ſpeak to ſuch in the words of the Prophet, *Fear not O Jacob my ſervant, and thou Jeſurun whom I have choſen. For I will pour*

Iſa 44. 2,3,4.

pour water upon him that is thirſty, and flouds upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring: And they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as Willows by the water-courſes. This bleſſed time is now come, and it is well for us that ſo it is. We are not now unprovided of an heavenly aid; God is ready to pour out upon us his Holy Spirit: Our Lord came, *To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord — To comfort all that mourn: To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the oyl of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs, that they might be called trees of righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.* Let us not now fear nor be diſmayed under all our afflictions and perſecutions: Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world. This heavenly Comforter will abide when earthly comforts leave us. And may we but receive the Isa. 61. 2, 3.

Joy

Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, we ſhall not need be over-whelmed with our earthly ſorrows.

2. This ſpeaks our duty as well as our Privilege; And we may learn what we are to do, as well as what God hath done for us. The Holy Spirit is promiſed by God, but muſt be implored by us. God will give him, but not to the careleſs and cold, the formal and indifferent, the looſe and the profane.

Let us then be exhorted to ask, and ſeek, and knock: Let us now fervently implore this Holy Comforter, this Spirit of truth and power. I need not tell you what great need we have of power from above: We are weak Creatures, full of our fears, expoſed to many evils and ſufferings, and need an help from above to confirm and ſtrengthen us: We know not how ſoon we may be called forth to ſuffer the extremeſt evils, or may be ſtript and deprived of all our worldly

worldly Goods and Poſſeſſions: We cannot tell how ſoon we may lie upon our dying beds, when our Soul ſhall ſit ready to take its flight from our trembling lips, when our Fleſh ſhall fail us, and we ſhall be abandoned by our earthly comforts and ſupports. Whither ſhall we go for comfort then? What will ſupport us under theſe trials but the ſenſe of Gods love, and the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt? This Comfort will reconcile us to Priſons, and to Poverty, and to Death it ſelf. We ſhall then have hope even in Death it ſelf, *And ſuch an hope as maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us.* Rom. 5. 5.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall in the next place conſider the Example of Chriſt, and of holy men, who have ſuffered the greateſt evils, which this world could inflict upon them. And for the better ſpeaking to this, I ſhall,

Firſt, Take notice that the Holy Scripture calls upon us to reflect upon theſe Examples under our afflictions.

Secondly, I ſhall give you a very ſhort account of their ſufferings.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew you the great uſefulneſs of theſe great examples unto us.

1. I ſhall take notice that the holy Scripture calls upon us to reflect upon theſe examples under our afflictions.

The

The Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews gives us a large account of the ſufferings of holy men: And then ſubjoyns, *Wherefore ſeeing we alſo are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of Witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the Race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the Author and finiſher of our faith; Who for the joy that was ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame*, &c. He animates them by theſe great examples, which they were therefore obliged to keep in their eye. And they are at once put in mind to reflect upon the exemplary ſufferings of holy men, and of our bleſſed Saviour. To the ſame purpoſe St. *James* exhorts thoſe to whom he writes, *Take my Brethren the Prophets, who have ſpoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of ſuffering affliction and of patience — Ye have heard of the Patience of Job, and have ſeen the*

Chap. 11.

Heb. 12. 1, 2.

Jam. 5. 10, 11.

the end of the Lord.—— *i. e.* as ye have read or heard of the Patience of *Job*, (who lived many Ages before, and probably ſuffered before the Law of *Moſes* was given) ſo ye have many of you ſeen how patiently our Lord Jeſus ſuffered. It was one end of our Lords ſufferings that we might learn patience from his example: *For even hereunto were ye called, becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.* And indeed the holy Scripture is very large and very particular in giving us an account of the ſufferings and of the patience of Chriſt, and of holy men, that we might learn to write after ſo fair a Copy, and imitate them in patience and reſignation to the Will of God, which in them was ſo exemplary: *For whatſoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

1 Pet. 2. 21.

Rom. 15. 4.

2. I

2. I ſhall give you a very ſhort account of their ſufferings. And,

Firſt, Of the ſufferings of Jeſus the Author and the finiſher of our faith. His whole life was little elſe than a continual ſuffering. And he was a moſt unparallel'd example of *Innocence*, and of *ſuffering*; and not only of ſufferings, but of the greateſt meekneſs and exemplary patience under them. He was born in a Stable, and died upon a Croſs. Born among Beaſts, and died among Malefactors. He was perſecuted as ſoon as he was born, and when he was capable of doing no evil, he was hunted after as a Malefactor. His Perſecution began from *Herod* an *Idumæan*, it was *carried* on by the Jews his *Countrymen*, and compleated by *Pilate* the *Roman*. And though he hurt no man, yet he was purſued by all. His great *Poverty* did not protect him from *Envy*, His profound *Meekneſs* did not preſerve him from the *Contradictions* of Sinners;

Sinners; And his known *Innocence* did not ſave him from the Sentence of *Death*.

His body was like one of ours. He was as ſenſible of pain as we are: And certain it is that his Enemies loaded it greatly. What part of him was exempt? His Head was Crowned with Thorns, his Hands and Feet were pierced with Nailes, his Side was goared with a Spear, his Shoulders loaded with a Croſs: He was ſpit upon, buffeted, and ſcourged; And at laſt hanged on a Tree without regard and pity.

Mat. 26. 37, 38. Mar. 14. 33. Luk. 22. 44. Pſal. 22. 14.

His Soul was afflicted greatly: He was ſorrowful and heavy, and that even to death. He was ſore amazed, and very heavy. He was in an Agony, and ſweat as it were drops of bloud. His heart was like Wax, melted in the midſt of of his Bowels. At length he is forced to bear his Croſs, on that he is hanged, there he bleeds, and there he cries out, *My God,*

my

my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?

But as he endured the Croſs, ſo he deſpiſed the ſhame: For his death was ignominious, as well as painful. He died among Criminals, and the death of the worſt and vileſt of men.

Thus did our Saviour ſuffer. Thus entred he into his glory. And all this he bore with invincible patience. He did not want power to reſcue himſelf, and to puniſh his Enemies; nor did he want the greateſt provocation: He was innocent, and had lived an uſeful life, But for all this he is not provoked againſt his Enemies, nor does he complain againſt God. For as he prays for his enemies, ſo he reſigns himſelf unto God.

Secondly, For the ſufferings of Holy men both before and ſince our Saviours death I muſt not undertake to give you an account. It would fill ſome Volumes to be particular in this Argument: We read

of those before our Saviours sufferings (of whom this world was not worthy) that had trial of cruel *mockings* and *scourgings*, of *bonds* and *imprisonments*: That were *stoned* and *sawn* asunder, *tempted* and *slain* with the Sword, that wandred about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented: They wandred in Deserts and *Mountains*, and were in Dens and Caves of the Earth.

Heb. 11. 36.

And for the times afterwards, we have very large accounts of the sufferings of the Apostles and Primitive Christians for a long time, and a very particular account of the exemplary patience and meekness, courage and undauntedness of them that suffered. These are things very well known to them that have read the holy Scriptures, and the ancient Writers of the Christian Church: Besides the many examples we have upon record of those who have with great patience suffered for the truth

truth in the later Ages of Chriſtianity. We have many examples of thoſe who have chearfully gone into Goales, and given their bodies to be burnt for the ſake of the truth.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew you the great uſefulneſs of theſe great examples to us. For when we are directed to reflect upon them, it is ſuppoſed that it is for our advantage that we ſhould do ſo.

For it cannot be denied but that the Church hath gained much by the exemplary ſufferings of holy men. The bloud of Martys hath been a fruitful Seed: And the Church did then grow when it was perſecuted. *I would ye ſhould underſtand, Brethren, that the things which hapned unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Goſpel.*—— *And many of the Brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds are much more bold to ſpeak the Word without fear.* Holy Phil. 1. 12, 14.

men have done great ſervice to the Church by a reſolute dying for the Truth. Their death hath been like that of *Samſon's*, who deſtroyed more Philiſtins then, than he had at any time before. The Heathen could ſay of good men, *That if in their life they were profitable, they were much more ſo in their death.*

v. Arrian. Epictet. l. 4. c. 1.

For by this means the Truth hath got ground, and the Religion hath been ſpread in the world. Men are very prone to favour the perſecuted and afflicted ſide, and where they ſee the afflicted ſupport undauntedly, they are very much inclined to judge favourably of their Cauſe. Hence in the Primitive times men came into the Church, when they ſaw the Chriſtians ſuffer the greateſt torments with the moſt invincible patience. They began to enquire what this Religion was which did thus ſupport its Followers; And hence they were induced to the Profeſſion

feſſion of that Religion which did ſo powerfully ſupport its Followers: And thus when ſome were cut off, others came in from the Heathen world. But I ſhall particularly conſider the uſefulneſs of theſe examples to us: I ſhall ſhew you what benefit we may receive from the patient ſufferings of Martyrs and other holy men.

Plures efficimur quoties metimur à vobis. Tert. Apol. c. 45

1. We are by this means aſſured that the greateſt torments may be endured, and ſupported under. We do very often fear that we ſhould never be able to bear the ſcorching flames, that we can never endure the torments of a Rack, extremity of cold and hunger, and other pains. For we have been tenderly brought up, and have been uneaſie under ſmall pains: And have not known what hunger and thirſt, cold and nakedneſs mean: Hence we conclude, that we ſhould never be able to endure great ſeverities.

The truth is, It were much to be feared that we ſhould rather renounce our Religion, than hold out under the ſharpeſt perſeution did we only look into our ſelves. But when we conſider the power of God, and look upon the examples of holy Martyrs, we have great cauſe to hope that we ſhall be able to ſubmit to torments, and to death for the ſake of our Religion: For if we are weak, if we have been brought up tenderly, if we are of a timerous nature, *&c.* ſo were many of thoſe Martyrs, who yet rejoyced afterwards in Priſons, welcomed the Fire and Faggot, and rejoyced that they were thought worthy to die for the name of Jeſus. And thoſe have done this who did ſuſpect themſelves, and were ſuſpected by others alſo. We are hereby encouraged to hope well, when we ſee that men that were ſubject to the like paſſions with us have continued ſtedfaſt to the laſt.

2. We

2. We are further hereby assured that God will not fail to give assistance in the time of need. Which is a truth, the belief whereof does much tend to quiet and comfort us amidst our many fears and distractions. Hence we are encouraged to hope that God will stand by us, and help us when our burden is heavy upon us, and we can now *come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.* This is the use that we are called upon to make of the sufferings of our Lord: *Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

Heb. 4. 16.

Cha. 12. 3.

Indeed, God hath been pleased to assure us, that *He will never leave us nor forsake us.* And the Apostle says, *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye*

Heb. 13. 5.

1 Cor. 10. 13.

are able: But will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it. In which words we are aſſured, that God will give us a good event if we call in, and depend upon his help and
2 Theſ. 3. 3. aſſiſtance. *The Lord is faithful, who ſhall eſtabliſh you, and keep you from all evil.* And the ſame Apoſtle elſewhere ſpeaks to the ſame
1 Theſ. 5. 22,23,24. purpoſe, ſaying, *Abſtain from all appearance of evil: And the very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly: And I pray God your whole ſpirit and ſoul and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Faitful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it.* Theſe are great promiſes and aſſurances which God hath been pleaſed to give us, and we ought upon all occaſions to conſider them. But ſo it is, we are of little faith, and very prone to fear: But then ſeeing we are incompaſſed with ſo thick a cloud of Witneſſes, to whom theſe promiſes have been made good, we are farther

ther confirmed that he, who hath done it, will ſtill perform the word which he hath ſpoken. For theſe examples before our eyes have a great force towards the ridding us of thoſe fears which are apt to ſolicite us: For from them we learn what weak Creatures can do, when they are aſſiſted by a power from above.

3. We are by this means farther confirmed in our Religion, and conſequently thereupon the more firmly obliged to continue ſtedfaſt in the Profeſſion of it. He that dies for his Religion, and does it undauntedly, does more than he that defends it by learned Diſcourſes. It is not every man can diſcern the force of Arguments: He that lives well, and that dies with courage for his Religion, 'tis he that defends his Faith, and commends it to the Conſciences of men. This man does moſt effectually vindicate his Religion from thoſe aſperſions that are caſt upon it. No man

man does more effectually refute the ſlanders againſt Religion than he that dies for it chearfully; as for example:

This courſe confirms the truth of Religion. There are thoſe who would inſinuate that Religion is a State-Engine, contrived for worldly ends, and for the better government of men: That Heaven and Hell are no realities, but contrived for the intereſt of humane Societies. He that is willing to part with his life in defence of his Religion, does deſtroy this inſinuation, and makes it evident that his Religion does not ſerve a worldly intereſt, and that Heaven and Hell are great realities.

There are others that inſinuate, that Religion is an ineffectual Principle: And if you were to judge of Religion by the Lives as well as Doctrines of ſome men, you would be apt to think it a very dull and ineffectual Principle, that were deſtitute of all power to enable

enable men to do what it does command.

But then the man that forſakes this world, that deſpiſes all its glories, and continues undaunted under all its threats and frowns; He that dares to be good, whatever he ſuffer on that behalf, ſuch a man as this makes it appear, that his Religion is a very powerful Principle, and that it is accompanied with a Divine Aſſiſtance.

Again, They that ſuffer for Religion do recommend the excellency and inward glories of Religion: They diſcover the beauties of it. And that they do when they give ſo great a proof of what it commends to us, *viz.* A fervent love of God, a contempt of the World, a profound Meekneſs, Patience, and Charity, Juſtice, and Truth. Theſe are thoſe things which ſhine in theſe examples, and do ſpeak aloud the perfections of that Religion which does produce them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

I Come now to lay before you ſome other helps and aſſiſtances that the afflicted and perſecuted Chriſtian is provided with. And in the next place I deſire you to conſider,

The *Interceſſion* of the Son of God: And this is an unſpeakable comfort and ſupport where it is duly conſidered. And that ſo it is, we may learn from what we read of St. *Stephen*; You know very well that he was accuſed; and though he made his defence, yet he was ſo far from appeaſing his Enemies thereby, that they were more enraged. We read, that they were *cut to the heart, and they gnaſhed on him with their teeth.* But though his Enemies were enraged, and diſturbed, yet this holy man continues calm and quiet: And what

Acts 7.54, 55, 56.

was

was it that kept him ſo? We read what it was, in theſe words: *But he being full of the Holy Ghoſt, looked up ſtedfaſtly into heaven, and ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right hand of God.* Here was that which kept him undiſturbed, when his Enemies were tranſported with fury: Hence he had his ſtrength and his undauntedneſs: He ſays himſelf, *Behold I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of man ſtanding on the right hand of God.* And now, though his Enemies *gnaſh on him with their teeth*, though they cry *out with a loud voice*, though they *ſtop their ears*, and *run* upon him with one *accord*, and *caſt him out of the City*, and *ſtone him:* Yet the holy man is not for all this diſcompoſed; nor ſo far diſturbed, but that he was able to continue to call upon God, and his bleſſed Saviour, and to pray for his Enemies that put him to death. And after this, it is not ſaid that he was killed, or ſtoned, that he was murdered,

murdered, or the like, but that he
Ver.60. *fell asleep.* After this gentle manner is this Saints death expressed: But that which made his death so easie to him was, that as he was full of the Holy Ghost, so he saw Jesus at the right hand of God. And we shall find that this sight of Jesus at Gods right hand will be of great moment towards our support under the greatest and sharpest miseries of this life. *Who shall lay any thing to*
Rom. 8. 33,34. *the charge of Gods Elect?* says St. *Paul*; *It is God that Justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.* But we have greater comfort than this, and therefore he goes on, *Yea, rather that is risen again*; nor does the Apostle stay here neither; *who is even at the right hand of God*; he goes farther still, *who also maketh intercession for us.* This is a great height indeed; we are now very secure from danger, since Jesus did not only *die for our sins*, and rise *again for our Justification*; but,

after

after this, went into *Heaven*, and is there concerned on our behalf. Well might the Apoſtle now Triumphingly go on, and he does ſo, when he ſays, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or Sword? (as it is written, for thy ſake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as ſheep for the ſlaughter) nay, in all theſe things we are more than Conquerours through him that loved us. For I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Ver. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39.

But for the better proceeding in this comfortable Argument of Chriſts interceding for us in Heaven I ſhall,

Firſt, Shew where Chriſt now is, *viz.* in Heaven, at Gods right hand.

Secondly,

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew you how far he is there concerned on our behalf.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew you how this tends towards our ſupport and comfort under the troubles of this life.

1. I ſhall ſhew where Chriſt is, viz. *in Heaven.* He was contented for our ſakes to be born of a Woman, to lie in a Manger, to be tempted in a Wilderneſs, to die upon a Croſs, and to be buried in a Sepulchre. But thanks be to God, he that was born ever lives, and he that died and was buried, was raiſed from the dead, and aſcended into heaven, and is *ſate down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high*; *crowned with glory and honour*; *Made higher than the Heavens. He is aſcended up far above all Heavens*; Far above *all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come. God hath highly exalted*

Heb. 1. 3.
Chap. 2. 9.
Chap. 7. 26.
Eph. 5. 10.
Chap. 1. 20, 21.
Phil 2. 9.

exalted and given him a Name which is above every name. He is gone into Heaven, and is at the right hand of God, Angels, and Authorities, and Powers being made subject unto him. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

It cannot be denied, but the Air and the Clouds are called by the name of heaven; and consequently, when Christ was in them, he might be said to have been in Heaven. But certain it is, that the expressions mentioned before rise higher, and imply, that Christ is ascended into the higher Heavens, even into that place where God does more particularly presentiate himself. Our Lord passed through those lower heavens as we read, *We have a great High Priest that is passed through the heavens*, (as those words may be rendred, which we render, *passed into the Heavens*) *Jesus the Son Son of God.* Heb. 4. 14. Διεληλυθότα τὺς οὐρανὺς.

For that Jesus entred into the higher Heavens is evident, not only from what hath been observed

before, but from what the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* tells us farther: *For Chriſt is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven it ſelf.* The Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle was the Type of the higheſt Heavens, whither Jeſus is now gone once for all, as the High Prieſt alone was wont to go into the moſt holy place once a year.

Heb. 9. 24.

But as our Lord is thus exalted, ſo we are alſo farther aſſured of his Dominion and Power: He having a Name given him above every name, *That at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth. And that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* He is not a Titular King, that is without Authority and Power; that cannot help his Servants, or puniſh his Enemies; The Father hath *given him authority to execute judgment*

Phil. 2. 10, 11.

Joh. 5. 27.

judgment, becauſe he is the Son of man. And the Son of man ſhall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he ſhall reward every man according to his works. Mat. 16. 27.

It appears then from what hath been ſaid, that Chriſt is in Heaven, yea, in the Higheſt Heavens; and not only ſo, but he is alſo Lord over all, the great King and Governour of his Church, able to reward and to puniſh, to help and ſuccour thoſe that belong to him. And this is a fair ſtep to that which follows, and that is,

2. To ſhew you how far Chriſt is there concerned on our behalf. For, ſince he wants not Authority and Power; if he be alſo concerned for us, that is, if he bear us good will, and in his Exaltation concerns himſelf for his Diſciples and his Followers, it muſt needs be a very comfortable Doctrine to all thoſe Diſciples of his that are in want and trouble here below.

But eſpecially it muſt be very much to the comfort of all thoſe pious ſouls that ſuffer perſecution in this world for his ſake.

1. In general, that Chriſt is concerned for us, now he is in heaven, is plain from the words of the Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, where he tells that Chriſt entred into *heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us.* For as the High Prieſt, when on the day of Expiation he went into the Holy of Holies, was concerned for the whole Congregation, as well as for himſelf; ſo Chriſt when he entred into Heaven, went thither concerned for us. It is to be conſidered, that our bleſſed Lord had taken upon him our fleſh, and our infirmities, and was made like unto one of us: He carried with him this nature into Heaven, and therewithal a ſenſe of our wants, and of our infirmities. *For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels but he took on him the Seed of Abraham.*

Heb. 9. 24. Ver. 7.

Heb. 2. 15, 16, 17.

ham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren: That he might be a merciful and faithful High Prieſt, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people. For in that he himſelf hath ſuffered being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted. It is not to be imagined, that Chriſt, who took our nature upon him, and conſequently underſtood the infirmities and frailties of our mortal ſtate, ſhould forget us here below, now he himſelf is exalted in the Heavens. For as nothing but his mercy and pity towards us could at firſt invite him down among us, ſo it is not to be believed, that after ſo much love and condeſcenſion, ſo long a trial of the infirmities of our condition, he ſhould be now unconcerned for us that are below. The ſame divine Author aſſures us otherwiſe; *Seeing then,* ſays he, *that we have a great High Prieſt that is paſſed into the heavens,* Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16.

Jeſus the Son of God, let us hold faſt our Profeſſion: For we have not an High Prieſt, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

2. More particularly, ſtill Chriſt *offers up our Prayers unto God*, and we are now aſſured that God hears us upon his account who laid down his life a Sacrifice for us. It is to be remembred, that the High Prieſt on the day of Expiation, when he entred into the Holy of Holies, was obliged not only to ſprinkle the bloud of the Sacrifice there, but alſo to offer up Incenſe too. Agreeably hereunto, our bleſſed Saviour, who is entred into the holy place made without hands, offers up our Prayers to God; And we have good aſſurance of our acceptance when we conſider the merit

Lev. 16. 12, 13.

merit of his death, and the ſatiſfaction which he had made with his bloud.

That the Incenſe which the High Prieſt offered up was a Symbol of the Prayers of the Saints cannot be denied by him that conſiders what the holy Scripture teaches us elſewhere. For we find that Prayers are likened to, and called Incenſe, it being a thing very uſual in the holy Scriptures to call the thing ſignified by the name of the ſign which repreſents it. *Let my prayer*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *be ſet forth before thee as Incenſe, and the lifting up of my hands as the Evening Sacrifice.* Elſewhere, *Incenſe* is called the *Prayers of the Saints:* Hence it was, that when the Prieſt went into the Temple to offer Incenſe, *the whole multitude of the People were praying without at the time of Incenſe.* To this purpoſe we are told, that it was the cuſtom when the Prieſt entred into the holy place to offer Incenſe, to give

Pſal. 141. 2.
Rev. 5 8.
Chap. 8. 3.
Luk. 1. 10.

notice of the preciſe time of his going in by the ringing of a Bell, that ſo the People might thereupon ſilently betake themſelves to their Prayers. And it is thought that the words (*Rev.* 8. 1, 3.) have a particular reſpect to that matter.

v. D. Lightfoots Hor. Hebr. On Luk. 1. 10.

3. Conſequently, upon what hath been laſt ſaid, we do receive from Chriſts Interceſſion grace *to help in time of need*; And as our ſorrows and our needs are very various, as well as very great, which ſend us to the Throne of Grace, ſo it is very evident (from what hath been ſaid) that our ſupports and our ſupplies are derived to us from the Interceſſion of the Son of God. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins.*

Heb. 4. 16.

Acts 5. 31.

But that there may be no manner of doubt remaining of the truth of what hath been ſaid before, I ſhall from the Scriptures ſhew you the

the assurances which they give us of this truth, from whence it will evidently appear, that Christ, now he is in Heaven, is our Patron and our Advocate there.

I shall begin with those words of St. *John*, *My little Children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Can any thing be more plain, or more comfortable than these words are? Nothing so much dejects the good man as his sins and his infirmities: These things indeed sink him low, and fill him with great fears. And certain it is, that no man can say he hath *no sin*, but he that deceives himself. But is the good man left without a remedy? No certainly. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Chap. 1. 8, 9.

unrighteouſneſs. It is true indeed, we ought not to ſin out of the hopes of pardon; and if we do ſo, our condition is very ſad indeed: But ſo it is, that the beſt man may be ſurprized and overtaken; and if he be, here is comfort for him in theſe words. Behold here an Advocate with the Father; and we ſhall not want an Accuſer when we have done amiſs, for beſides the Devil (who is the Accuſer of the Brethren) our great Enemy, our own Conſcience will quickly do that. We ſhall need an Advocate to plead our Cauſe with God, and to undertake for us. And bleſſed be God we are provided for: *We have an Advocate with the Father*; We do not want an Interceſſor with God. But we might fear ſtill if our Advocate were himſelf guilty; we could have little comfort from his Interceſſion for us who is himſelf obnoxious. But it follows, *Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*: A moſt powerful

Rev. 12. 10.

ful and innocent perſon under-takes for us. But yet for all this, guilt makes men fearful and ſuſpicious, and they fear they ſhall not obtain pardon, though their Advocate be *innocent* and *powerful*, unleſs he have ſomething *more* to *plead* in the behalf of them that are accuſed. And therefore it follows, *He is the propitiation for our ſins.* Our Advocate cannot only plead his own *Innocence*, as he is Jeſus Chriſt the *righteous*, but he can plead his *Merit* too, he having by his death made expiation for our ſins; *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his bloud.* Our Advocate hath paid a price for our ranſom, and this price was accepted of God; and the bloud that Jeſus ſhed does now plead for us. If after all this the dejected ſinner fear that the bloud which Chriſt ſhed was not ſhed for him, this needleſs fear is removed by the words which follow: *And not for ours only, but alſo*

Rom. 5. 25.

also for the sins of the whole world.

Let us next consider the words of the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, where he tells us, that Christ entred into Heaven it
Heb.9.24. self *to appear in the presence of God for us.* Just as the High Priest entred with the bloud of the Sacrifice into the Holy of Holies, which
Ver.7. he *offered up there for himself, and for the errors of the People.* There it was that the High Priest made
Lev.16. 17. *Attonement for all the Congregation of Israel.* Our blessed Lord hath shed his bloud, and now appears before God for us. *Neither by the bloud of Goats and Calves, but by*
Heb.9.12. *his own bloud he entred in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* Again, *This*
Heb.10. 12. *man after he had offered one Sacrifice for sin, for ever sate down at the right hand of God.* It is observed (by a very learned man) that these two expressions, *viz. To appear in the presence of God for us:* And

To

To offer himſelf up to God, (both which are ſaid of Chriſt, *Heb.* 9.) do ſignifie one and the ſame thing diverſely conſidered. The latter expreſſion implies, the *beginning*; the former, the *continuation* of one and the ſame thing. Our Saviour commends us to God, and this is meant, when it is ſaid, that he appears in the *preſence of God for us*; but he began to do this when, after he had ſhed his bloud, he offered *himſelf to God in heaven*; Heb. 9. 25. As the High Prieſt, after the Sacrifice was ſlain, carried the bloud into the Holy of Holies, and there appeared with it before God. So that this appearing of Chriſt for us, and his offering himſelf to God imports his Interceſſion for us, and does imply the merits of his bloud, and the Atonement which our Lord hath made for us. And this ſpeaks great comfort to us. *For if the bloud of* Heb. 9. 13, 14. *Bulls and of Goats, and the aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh:*

How

How much more ſhall the bloud of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf, without ſpot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead works to ſerve the living God?

The Author of this Epiſtle tells us, that Chriſt hath an *unchangeable Prieſthood:* He is not like one of the Prieſts of *Aaron*, who died and left one of his Brethren to ſucceed him: Our Lord lives for ever. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.* Which words aſſure us at once of Chriſt's *power* to ſave us, and of his *inclination* and readineſs to do it. For as he is *able* to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him; ſo he is alſo *prone* to do it, and concerns himſelf about it; he ever liveth to *make interceſſion* for them. To make interceſſion is to plead in the behalf of another, that he may be relieved, or releaſed. It is oppoſed to accuſing or condemning:

Heb. 7. 24, 25.

ing: *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* Rom. 8. 34.

To what hath been ſaid let me add the words of our Saviour: *Whatſoever you ſhall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* Here is great encouragement to us to pray to God: We may now approach unto God with very great aſſurance of ſucceſs, having ſuch a Mediator and Interceſſor. But our Saviour goes on; *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, i. e.* ye have not as yet made a trial how powerful a name mine is: But for for the future he *directs* and *encourages* them. *Ask, and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* And preſently afterwards he gives them great aſſurance that their Prayers ſhall now be heard upon his account. *At that day ye ſhall ask in my name, and I ſay not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.* Joh. 16. 23. Ver. 24. Joh. 16. 26, 27.

For the

the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

III. I proceed now to shew you, how what hath been said tends towards our support and comfort under the troubles of this life. And that it does several ways.

1. The exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God is much for our comfort, as it gives us great hope that we shall also be received into heaven. Our nature is advanced, and this gives us hope that we shall also in due time be received into the same happy place. For as Christs Resurrection is made an Argument which infers ours, so our Lords being exalted into heaven speaks the great hopes that we have of coming thither. And this Consideration does mightily tend to comfort us under the sorrows of this life. *Let not your heart be troubled*, says our Lord. But then what follows tends greatly to support them: *I go to prepare a place for you:*

Joh. 14. 4.

you: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self; that where I am, there ye may be also. Thanks be to God, a door of hope is now opened by the Exaltation of our Saviour, *Which hope we have as an anchor of the Soul both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the Vail. Whither the forerunner is for us entred, even Jesus made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec.* None, under the Law of *Moses*, might enter into the Holy of Holies, but the High Priest only, and that but once a year, and not without bloud; *The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing.* There was a vail or partition between the Holy of Holies and the other part of the Temple: And when our Saviour suffered death, this Vail of the Temple was rent in twain after a most miracu-

Heb. 6. 19, 20.

Heb. 9. 7, 8.

lous manner: For though indeed there be mention made of an Earthquake at the ſame time, yet that the Vail was not rent by the Earthquake appears from hence, that the Text ſays, it was rent from the *top to the bottom*, not from *the bottom to the top*, as it would have been if it been the effect of an Earthquake. Now it is no hard matter to explain the meaning of this: The Holy of Holies, was a Type of Heaven. The reſt of the Temple and Tabernacle, of the reſt of the world. There was a Vail that ſhut up the way to Heaven, but when our Lord ſuffered, he opened the way that was ſhut up before; and a while after he went himſelf within the Vail, and took our nature with him; and by doing ſo, and ſending us the Holy Spirit, thence he hath given us aſſurance, that where he is we ſhall likewiſe be. He hath taken a pledge, I mean our fleſh, which he hath carried into heaven as a Pledge *that*

Mat. 27. 51.

we

we ſhall enter thither; and given us the earneſt of his Holy Spirit in token that we belong to him, and that we *ſhall ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.*

Pignus totius Summæ. Tert. de reſ. Carn. 2 Theſ. 4. 17, 18.

2. What hath been ſaid tends to our comfort, as it gives us aſſurance of a Divine Aſſiſtance at hand for our ſuccour and ſupport, and for the enabling us to do, as well as ſuffer, the whole will of God. We have not the leaſt cauſe to doubt either of the *Power*, or *readineſs* and *Proneneſs* of our Lord to help us, and ſupport us under all our conflicts, and eſpecially then when we are perſecuted for righteouſnes ſake. Our Saviour is not a mere *Spectator*, he does not only ſee us fight, but he helps us to overcome. Whatever it is that troubles us, we are not left without a Prince and a Saviour, and one that is able to ſave to the uttermoſt. And this muſt needs tend very greatly to the quieting

of our minds under all the troubles and ſorrows that we meet withal.

3. This tends very much to our ſupport and comfort as it encourages our Prayers, and aſſures us that we ſhall ſucceed when we make our addreſſes to God, and implore his Divine aid and aſſiſtance. We have a merciful High Prieſt, that was made like unto us, and hath about him a ſenſe of our infirmities: *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Having therefore, Brethren, boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way which he hath conſecrated for us through the Vail, that is to ſay, his Fleſh, and having an High Prieſt over the Houſe of God: Let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with pure water.*

Heb. 4. 16.

Heb. 10. 19, 20, 21, 22.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

ANother great comfort and ſupport which the Chriſtian is provided with under the ſorrows of this life, is that of the Holy Scripture.

The Pſalmiſt expreſſes the great comfort he received from the Law of God in his affliction; *Unleſs thy Law had been my delights, I ſhould then have periſhed in my affliction.* Pſal. 119. 92. He doth elſewhere expreſs his great eſteem for, and the great delight he had in the Law of God; *The Law of thy mouth is better unto me, than thouſands of Gold and Silver.* Ver. 72. He elſewhere tells us, that *the Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart; the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.* Pſal. 19. 8. and ſpeaking preſently afterwards of the Jndgments of the Lord, he ſays of them; *More to be deſired* Ver. 10.

are they than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold; ſweeter alſo than honey and the honey Comb. And now it is no wonder that we find him profeſſing in theſe words; *I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea, above fine Gold: I eſteem all thy Precepts*, concerning *all* things, to be *right*. After this he adds, *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, becauſe they keep not thy Law.* Thus was the devout Pſalmiſt affected towards the Law of God. This was his comfort, and his joy, his riches, and his greateſt treaſure; Here was his heart fixed, and this was his great delight.

Pſal. 119. 127, 128.

Ver. 136.

And yet in the Pſalmiſts time there was but little of the holy Scripture committed to writing in proportion to what we enjoy. The Canon of the Old Teſtament was far from being finiſhed, much leſs was there any thing extant of the New. We have the advantage by much, who have not only all the parts of the Old Teſtament, but alſo

alſo an account of our Saviours Doctrine, and the Writings of the holy Apoſtles. Now the words of the Pſalmiſt will well become every one of us; *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte?* Yea, ſweeter *than honey to my mouth.* If a part of it were ſo ſweet, what is the whole? And if the Law which came by *Moſes* were ſo great a treaſure, and a comfort to the afflicted, what are then the words of grace and truth, which we have by Jeſus Chriſt? Pſal. 119. 103.

The Book of Pſalms hath always been allowed to be a divine Compoſure of very ſovereign uſe to the afflicted, and the ſorrowful pious and dejected men have been unſpeakably comforted from thence. As when the evil Spirit was upon *Saul*, when *David* took his Harp and played, that evil Spirit departed from him: So hath it often been, that when men have been dejected and bowed down by an evil Spirit likewiſe, yet they 1 Sam. 16. 23.

have often been refreſhed by this divine and ſweet Singer of *Iſrael*. The Book of *Pſalms* is ſtored with ſovereign Cordials for the dejected and drooping ſpirit of the pious man. But I had rather you ſhould hear one of the Ancients ſpeak of the great uſefulneſs of this Book of Pſalms. *If* (ſays he) *a man be greatly tranſported with fury, by the melody of a Pſalm he is rendred tame. A Pſalm* (ſays he) *is the calm of Souls, the Arbiter of peace, who lays the tumultuous and ſwelling thoughts. It ſoftens the fierce, and curbs the laſcivious. It conciliates friendſhip, unites thoſe that were in difference, and reconciles thoſe that were at enmity, — A Pſalm puts the Devils to flight, and brings to us the aſſiſtance of Angels. It is a Weapon againſt our fears of the night, and a reſt from the labours of the day. To Children it is a ſafeguard, to the Adult an ornament, and a comfort to old men. The moſt agreeable Ornament of Women. It renders the Wil-*

Baſil in Pſal. 1.

derneſs

derneſs inhabited, and the Concourſe of people ſober. It is an inſtitution to thoſe who begin, an encreaſe of the Proficients, and the ſtay of them that are perfect, and the voice of the Church. This gives a gaiety to Feſtivals, and produces a godly ſorrow. A Pſalm brings a tear from an heart of ſtone; it is the work of Angels, the Converſation of heaven, the ſpiritual Incenſe. He goes on, and tells us, what an excellent Storehouſe this Book of Pſalms is, from whence we may learn the *Majeſty of fortitude, the exactneſs of righteouſneſs, the venerableneſs of Temperance, the perfection of Prudence, the manner of Repentance, the meaſures of Patience.* Thus does he ſpeak of the Book of Pſalms. And if one Book be thus uſeful, what are all of them? And if this Book be ſo much to our Comfort, how many and great then are the Comforts of the Scripture?

I ſhall now ſhew you how the holy Scriptures make for our comfort

fort and ſupport under the afflictions and ſorrows of this preſent life. And this they do,

1. As they lay before us the ſeveral ſupports which have been named before, namely, the Promiſe of eternal life, the Doctrine of Gods particular care and Providence, the aſſurance of the aid of the Holy Spirit, the examples of the ſufferings of Chriſt and holy men, and the Interceſſion of the Son of God. Theſe things the holy Scriptures plainly teach, and by doing ſo they tend very much to our comfort in the midſt of all our tribulations. And as theſe Doctrines are not to be found among the Writings of any of the Heathen Philoſophers, ſo it is certain, they do contain the greateſt ground of comfort under our worldly loſſes and ſorrows: And therefore the holy Scripture tends more to our comfort than any Writing or Inſtitution whatſoever. It cannot be denied, but that

that many of the Heathens have written excellent things, and particularly have employed their pains in writing conſolatory diſcourſes for the ſake of the afflicted. But there are none of them that do ſuggeſt thoſe powerful Arguments which the Goſpel does contain. Here are comforts to be found which they knew nothing of, and ſuch comforts alſo as are very effectual for the gaining the end for which they are brought. We are (bleſſed be God) better provided for, under all the evils which happen to us, than the Heathens were. And though we be liable to the ſame evils which they were obnoxious unto, yet in this our condition is much better than theirs that we can bear them better than they could. We ſhall in vain ſearch into the Writings of *Plato*, or *Epictetus*, or any other of the Writings of the Heathen for ſupports under our ſorrows; The holy Scripture is the Divine Storehouſe

houſe where they are to be found.

2. The holy Scriptures make for our ſupport under our ſorrows as they do direct us to apply to our ſelves the helps and aſſiſtances which I have named before. They do not only contain great helps, but they teach us how to uſe them, and uſe very powerful Arguments with us to this purpoſe. They do not only preſcribe the moſt powerful Cordials, but they direct us alſo in the uſe of them; and not only ſo, but they do alſo by very moving Arguments awaken our care and our diligence. And indeed, without this application all the helps and aſſiſtances avail us no more than the richeſt Cordials do the ſick man which he keeps locked up in his Cloſet, but does not taſte.

The hope of Eternal life is very powerful to enable us to endure with patience the evils of this ſhort life: This is the great com-

fort

fort under our preſent ſorrows, that the bleſſed time is drawing on upon us when all tears ſhall for ever be wiped from our eyes. But then it is to be conſidered, that the holy Scripture does not barely lay before us the promiſe of eternal life: It is not a bare Map of of that bleſſed Country which we expect hereafter; it is a great deal more than that. For beſides that the holy Scripture deſcribes that bleſſed Land, it alſo ſhews us the way which leads to it, calls upon us to ſet our hearts upon it, and very powerfully calls off our affections and deſires from the things of this lower world, which would entangle us, and keep us from minding the things which are above. And to that purpoſe we are warned that the love of this world is inconſiſtent with the love of God, and our purſuit of heavenly things. And therefore we are vehemently exhorted to cleanſe and purifie our hearts, to follow after

after holineſs, that we may ſee God, and be fit for that bleſſed immortality which is brought to light through the Goſpel.

The particular care and Providence of God is another very powerful Argument to quiet and eaſe our minds under all events of things. This Doctrine the holy Scripture does not only teach, but directs us to the right uſe and application of it to our ſelves, and very frequently calls upon us to make the right uſe of it. Hence it is that we are ſo frequently exhorted to *be careful for nothing*, to *truſt in God*; *to caſt our care, and our burden upon him*; *To acknowledge him in all our ways.* And we are alſo frequently called off from all ſelf-confidence, or truſt in any Creature whatſoever. We are warned not to truſt to our own *Wiſdom*, our *Riches*, our *Allies*, and *Worldly aſſiſtances.* And the holy Scripture does upon all occaſions expoſe the Vanity of thoſe men who truſt

truſt in any thing but God, and it repreſents upon all occaſions how inconſiderable the beſt of the Creatures are.

Again, The Promiſe of the Holy Spirit is another great ſupport to us, and a ſtrong conſolation under the ſorrows and difficulties of this mortal life. Now the holy Scripture does not only contain ſuch a Promiſe, but alſo puts us upon that courſe in which we ſhall not fail to receive the comforts and aſſiſtances of this divine Spirit. We are aſſured that God will give his holy Spirit to them that ask him, and the holy Scripture, which gives us this aſſurance, does alſo with great vehemency put us upon begging of God this heavenly aſſiſtance. It puts us upon *asking*, upon *ſeeking* and *knocking*, upon all *Prayer*, and *Supplication*: It alſo puts us upon purity of heart, that we may be diſpoſed to receive this Holy Spirit, and warns us that we do not by our luſts and fooliſh practices

practices *grieve*, or *quench* this holy Spirit of God. And now if we be perſwaded to follow this advice we ſhall not fail of help and of comfort, and of peace and joy that paſſeth underſtanding: We ſhall be able to bear up under the greateſt ſorrows and preſſures of this lower world. *Yea, though we walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death we ſhall fear no evil.* But then it becomes us at all times to implore this Spirit of God, and to pray with the Pſalmiſt. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me: Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.*

Pſal. 23. 4.

Pſal. 50. 10, 11, 12.

The example of Chriſt and holy men who have ſuffered for the truth are not barely laid before us in the Scripture, but we are alſo directed in our afflictions to keep our eye upon theſe great examples; and if we do that, we ſhall be greatly

greatly encouraged to perſevere in our Chriſtian courſe, and tread in the ſteps of thoſe glorious examples. The Diſciple is not above his Maſter, and we ſhall find it no hard thing to ſuffer, if we conſider whoſe Servants we are. If they did ſuch things to the green tree, why ſhould we think much that men ſhould do ſo alſo to the dry? Hence it is that the Holy Scripture puts us upon looking unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of the Faith which we profeſs, and upon conſidering the Examples of the Prophets who have ſpoken in the name of the Lord, and have been very exemplary for ſuffering, and affliction, and for patience.

Again, The interceſſion of the Son of God is a moſt comfortable Doctrine of the Scripture: But it does not only teach us this, but directs us alſo to the uſe of it. For the holy Scripture does now ſend us to God by Jeſus Chriſt, and puts us upon going to the throne

of grace with a becoming boldneſs, and aſſurance that we ſhall now be accepted through him who died for us, and ever lives to make Interceſſion for thoſe who come unto God by him.

III. The holy Scriptures tend very much to our comfort under all our ſorrows, as they are the inſtrument of conveyance of the greateſt bleſſings to us. They are Gods act and deed, and on Gods part a great aſſurance to us of thoſe bleſſings which are only able to make us happy, and are able to make us ſo in ſpight of all the miſeries that can befall us in this preſent life. The Scriptures are not only to be conſidered as a Map and draught of our Inheritance which we hope for, but as a Teſtament and declared Will, which give us a right and title to, and conſequently a full aſſurance that we ſhall indeed enjoy thoſe things which we find preſented to us there. They do not only lay them before us, but

but they are by theſe divine Writings made over to us. We are by our bleſſed Saviour no more Servants, but Sons; and if we be Sons, we are alſo Heirs of God through Chriſt. But then the holy Scriptures are the Deeds and Conveyances of this Eſtate. And as they are ſo, they tend greatly to our comfort and ſupport under the afflictions of this life, and in the Midſt of them we may now juſtly eſteem our ſelves happy, as having ſo full an aſſurance of a future inheritance. Our Deeds and Writings for our worldly Eſtate we value greatly, becauſe they ſhew our Title and our Right, and therefore we preſerve them with great care, and pleaſe our ſelves that they are good, and well atteſted. Gal. 4. 7.

It is no little bleſſing, and ought to be no ſmall comfort to us that we have the holy Scriptures, which are a declaration of Gods favour and good will towards us. It was

the great Priviledge of the Jews that God had given them his Law.

Pſal. 147. 19,20. *He ſhewed his word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Iſrael. He had not dealt ſo with any Nation, and for his Judgments they have not known them.* The Apoſtle reckons it a Priviledge which the Jew enjoyed above the reſt of the world, that they had Gods Law among them.

Rom. 3. 1,2. *What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of Circumciſion? Much every way; chiefly becauſe that unto them were committed the Oracles of God.* This one thing did very much exalt the Jewiſh People above their Neighbours: And their Law gave them their Title to their Country, and was the Inſtrument of Conveyance of their Inheritance to them. And hence we find their Law is ſometime called their

Dent. 33. 4. *Inheritance; Moſes commanded us a Law, even the Inheritance of the Congregation of Jacob.* Indeed, their Law was their *Charter*, and *Inſtrument*

ment that contained their Title which they had to their Poſſeſſions: And the Land which they poſſeſſed was a Type of Heaven, and their Law and their Service was a ſhadow of good things to come. Heb. 10. 1.

But thanks be to God the caſe is well mended with us now. We have the ſubſtance clearly revealed, of which they had the ſhadow and the Type. Our bleſſed Saviour hath brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel; And the New Teſtament makes over to us our right and title to that bleſſed inheritance which our Lord hath purchaſed for us.

We had forfeited Gods favour, and needed an Atonement: The Law of *Moſes* preſcribed certain Sacrifices indeed for expiation, and the procurement of the favour of God; but it is very certain that thoſe Sacrifices could not *make the commers thereunto perfect.* Heb. 10. 1. But then it pleaſed God to ſend his only Son to die for our ſins, and *now he hath*

2 Cor. 5. 18,19,21. *reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt; and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation: To wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them. — For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*

The Kingdom of Heaven is now opened to all Believers, and none are now excluded from the hopes of that bleſſed ſtate who do not ſhut themſelves out by their unbelief, and impenitence, and contempt of the Laws of Chriſt. *For*

Joh. 3. 16,17. *God ſo loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. For God ſent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved.* This is the comfortable Doctrine of the holy Scripture, and hence it is that we have now great conſolation.

For

For there can be nothing ſo much for our comfort as the aſſurance which we have of Gods favour, which is better for us than life it ſelf.

But then to put us out of all doubt for ever, this truth is confirmed to us, as well as taught by the holy Scriptures. For our bleſſed Saviour wrought many Miracles to confirm to us the Doctrine which he taught, and by that means hath given us the utmoſt aſſurance that this comfortable Doctrine is a divine truth. To this purpoſe he cured the ſick, diſpoſſeſſed the dæmoniacks, raiſed the dead, reſtored the blind, commanded the Sea and the Wind, and roſe from the dead the third day. Many, and various, and ſupernatural are the works he did, and which are written in the Goſpels: And many more he did which are not written. *But theſe are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that* Joh. 20. 31.

believing ye might have life through his name. God hath ſet his Seal to the divine truths which the Goſpel does contain; And hath effectually taken from us all cauſe of doubt and ſuſpicion.

IV. The holy Scriptures tend very much to our comfort under our troubles, as they do contain many precious Promiſes which tend this way; God hath been pleaſed in theſe Writings to make many promiſes for the comfort of the afflicted and oppreſſed, of them that fear him, and truſt in him, and ſuffer for his names ſake. And nothing of what God hath ſaid ſhall fall to the ground: If we continue to truſt in God, and to do good, we ſhall find great comfort from the holy Scriptures in our greateſt ſorrows. *O how great is thy goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee: Which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee before the Sons of men!* Happy is that man that puts himſelf under

Pſal. 31. 19.

the

the Divine Protection. *Many ſorrows ſhall be to the wicked: But he that truſteth in the Lord, mercy ſhall compaſs him about.* Pſal. 32. 10. No man does ſo much conſult his own ſafety as He does that does intirely truſt in God, and commit himſelf and his affairs unto him. *They that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever.* Pſal. 125. 1.

I deny not but ſuch a man may fall into ſtraits and difficulties, but then he is not forſaken, but can have a recourſe to him that is at hand, and able to ſave him. *When my Spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou kneweſt my path: — I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me, no man cared for my Soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord, I ſaid, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the Land of the Living.* Pſal. 14. 2, 3. 4, 5. The good man may be bereft of his worldly comforts and ſupports, but then when he is moſt

most of all so, God is present with him. Nay, we are then more peculiarly the care of God, when we are abandoned by the Creature. The afflicted man is particularly the charge of Heaven, and does immediately belong to the divine care and Providence. The devout Psalmist makes his affliction his argument to move God to have
Psa. 142. 6. regard to him. *Attend unto my cry, for I am brought very low.*
Psal. 70. 5. Again, *But I am poor and needy*; and then he goes on, *Make haste unto me, O God.* The Prayers of the afflicted righteous find a ready way to God; they pierce the Heavens, and are sure to obtain a blessing.
Psal. 37. 18, 18. *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite Spirit.*

There is great comfort in the holy Scripture for every man that is sincerely good, and does desire to

to be better. And whatever his ſorrow and affliction be, he is not left comfortleſs. If he be burdened with his ſins, haraſſed out by the cares and toiles of a vexatious world, and very uneaſie under the load which lies upon him, yet is not this diſtreſſed and miſerable Sinner left without hope and comfort: Our Lord ſpeaks to ſuch as theſe are, ſaying, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoak upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your Souls. For my yoak is eaſie, and my burden is light.* How comfortable a Scripture is this to the dejected Sinner? That hath in vain ſought his happineſs from the things of this life; that hath toiled a great while to no purpoſe, and is now under fears of Gods wrath breaking in upon him as a juſt punſhment of a trifling and a vicious life? Theſe are moſt powerful words, and if men

Mat. 11. 28.

men would consider them duly, would appear to have a mighty force upon the minds of men. Can any thing be more welcom than rest to them that labour and are heavy laden? Is any rest to be compared to the rest which is given to our Souls? can any thing be more desirable for them that have served cruel Lords, than that they should now submit to one that is meek and lowly in heart? Can any thing be more inviting, after a great bondage and slavery, than a yoak that is easie, and a burden that is light? We are called upon to accept our own happiness; Courted to embrace all that bliss which we in vain look for from the World, and from our Sins. Our Lord, and our interest bid us come. Our Lord, who laid down his life for us, and who hath highly deserved of us, he invites us, and assures us of rest and peace, and that his yoak is easie, and his burden light.

And

And as the Scriptures do invite and encourage Sinners to enter themſelves under our Lord Jeſus, and to become his ſincere Followers and Diſciples; as they do invite us to the profeſſion and practice of the Laws of God, ſo they do greatly encourage us by the excellent promiſes which they contain, to continue in that profeſſion. The comforts of Religion are unſpeakably great, and no man is provided for as the Religious is under all events of things. Do we ſuffer for the ſake of the Truth? For our comfort it is written, *Bleſſed are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake: For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Are we reproached and reviled, nick-named, and flouted at? For our comfort it is written, *If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth upon you.* Again, *Bleſſed are you when men ſhall revile you,* &c. *Rejoyce and be exceeding glad; for great*

Mat. 5. 10.

1 Pet. 4. 14.

Mat. 5. 11, 12.

is

is your reward in heaven. Are we rifled and ſpoiled of our Goods?
Mar. 9. 29, 30. For our comfort it is written; *There is no man that hath left Houſe, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for my ſake, and the Goſpels, but he ſhall receive an hundred-fold in this time — and in the world to come, life everlaſting.* Are we threatned with death? To our unſpeakable comfort it is written, *He that loſeth his life for my ſake ſhall find it.* Again, *Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he ſhall receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.* Again, *And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord* (and ſurely they that die for him cannot then be excluded from this bleſſing) *from henceforth: Yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.* And, *Precious in the ſight*
Mat. 10. 39.
Jam. 1. 12.
Rev. 14. 13.
Pſal. 116. 15.

of

of the Lord is the death of the Saints.

And if the Scripture afford us ſo great comfort under perſecutions, and againſt the fear of death, it does not fail to do it under our other troubles, and lighter afflictions. We need not fear the want of what is needful when we have that Promiſe, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* Heb. 13. 5. We ſhall not need diſtract our ſelves about what we ſhall eat and drink, and wherewith we ſhall be cloathed, when it is ſaid by truth it ſelf, that all *theſe things ſhall be added unto us.* Mat. 6. 33. We have no cauſe to diſquiet our ſelves with the thoughts of what we ſhall do, when we come to a great trial, and appear before our potent Enemies. Our Lord hath ſaid, *Take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak; for it ſhall be given you in that ſame hour what ye ſhall ſpeak.* Mat. 10. 19. And we are elſewhere aſſured of grace to help in *the time of need.* Heb. 4. 16.

The

The Holy Scriptures afford comfort under every affliction. The Widows and the Fatherleſs are aſſured, *that a Father of the Fa-*
Pſal.68.5. *therleſs, and a Judge of the Widows is God in his holy habitation.* They that are oppreſſed, here find com-
Pſal.9.9. fort; *The Lord alſo will be a refuge for the oppreſſed, a refuge in times of trouble.* Here the poor are refreſhed: *There is no want to them*
Pſal.34. 9,10. *that fear him: The young Lions do lack and ſuffer hunger: But they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* The ſick receive their
Pſal.41.3. comforts alſo from the holy Scriptures; hence they are furniſhed with ſuitable Meditations, with pious Ejaculations and Prayers.

We are farther aſſured, *that all*
Rom.8. 28. *things work together for good to them that love God.* And how comfortable a conſideration is this to thoſe that meet with ſuch variety of things as do entertain us in this preſent world? For now we have but one Care about us, and that is to

to ſee that we do indeed above all things love God: If we do this, we may diſcharge our other Cares, and for ever ſend away our fears and jealouſies: There will be nothing can do us any hurt; nay, more than that, nothing can poſſibly befal us but it will do us good, and advance us fairly towards our great End and Happineſs. If our hearts be inflamed with the love of God, this world will make but vain attempts upon us: Whatever ſtorm or ſhock may happen to us, they will be but like thoſe Winds that leave the Trees which they ſhake the more firmly ſettled and rooted. If it be thus with us, we are ſafe, and ſhall not need to fear the greateſt evils that can befal us in this preſent life. Poverty, and Sickneſs, Pain, and Oppreſſion, and the other miſeries of life will leave us better than they found us. They will ſerve to rid us of our *remaining folly and wantonneſs*; To call us off from the

Creature to the Creator; They will but take from us our droſs and filth, and render us more prepared and fitted for our Maſters uſe. Nay, Death it ſelf (which we commonly think the greateſt evil) will do us a friendly office when it ſhall take us from this Valley of tears, and ſhadow of death, and tranſlate us to thoſe joys and pleaſures that are at Gods right hand for evermore. For death it ſelf is a great bleſſing to a good man: And if it be at any time otherwiſe, it is our ſin that hath rendred death a formidable evil. Death is indeed a great *Tyrant*, but it is ſo to them only that are unfit and unwilling to die, who are therefore haled to it againſt their wills. But then for thoſe that are fit and willing to die, death is a faithful *Servant*, that does but carry them whither they greatly deſire to go.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

IT remains now that we consider what hath been said before, and make use of the helps which God hath been pleased to provide us; and that we rather choose to *suffer* than to *sin*: It is no great matter what we lose, if we do not wrong our Consciences, and displease our God. Take courage then, and dare to be good, whatever it cost thee, and thou wilt soon find, that greater is he that is with thee, than he that is against thee. Suppose thou suffer death it self, and that a violent and a shameful one, yet wilt thou not want a present assistance, and a sufficient support even in that case. Our Religion were a very mean Institution if it would not bear a man up against the fears of death. I shall, to what hath been said above, add some

things to your farther consideration, to encourage you to give up your life rather than to deny your Religion, and wrong your Consciences. And,

I. That it cannot be supposed that death can hurt a good man. If death have any evil belonging to it, it is owing to our own folly. It is our sin only that gives it a sting. It is impossible it should hurt him that is sincerely good. *Socrates* told the *Athenians*, that they would rather hurt themselves than him by taking away his life; and that for his Accusers, he did not believe they could do him hurt, he not thinking it reasonable to believe it in the power of evil men to hurt the good. It is indeed in their power to kill, it is not in their power to hurt them that are good. That death can do us no hurt that hath had a good life gone before it. The worst of men desire to die the death of the righteous. Of all men those that are good have least cause

cauſe to fear dying: For they have placed their happineſs beyond this world: And death is to them unwelcom that live at eaſe here.

II. That it is very certain that many men have overcome the fear of death from a mean and low Principle, compared with that of the Chriſtian, who ſuffers for righteouſneſs ſake. Death, I grant, ſtrikes a dread upon Mankind. It is that which we commonly ſtartle at: It comes to take us apieces, to remove us from our Friends and Familiars that for ſome time we have converſed with. And hence it is, that men generally fear death, and decline it what they can. But yet we know that many have overcom this fear of death, ſome of them from a mean, and others from an evil Principle. Death is formidable, and a good man is not quite rid of all the fear of death; yet there are many conſiderations that make death ſeem deſirable. Revenge triumphs over it,

Love makes light of it, Honour is ambitious of it, fear of disgrace chooses it, Sorrow runs after it, it, Fear prevents it. A weak and foolish Passion, a trifling and a faulty Principle reconciles men to death: Some have thrown away their lives, others have given them up, many have parted with them upon trifling accounts, and sometimes upon evil ones. They have been contented to part with their lives from an *evil* Principle, or from a *trifling* one.

How many have proved Martyrs to their Lusts? How many to gratifie their Lust and their Revenge have brought upon themselves a lingring or a sudden death? How many have fallen Sacrifices to their Luxury and Intemperance, their Pride and Lust? And is it not a great shame that we should stick to do that from a good Principle which others do from a faulty one? Is it not a shame that the Lusts of men should prevail more than

Pudeat semper tantum in vobis posse turpes causas & nil posse pulcherrimas. Petrarch.

than the Laws of Chriſt? And that men ſhould make themſelves miſerable at that expence which they refuſe to be at in order to their happineſs?

There have been thoſe who have died for a ſilly Woman, for a point of Honour, for their Fame, and for their Country. Theſe things have prevailed with them to endure torments, and devote themſelves to deſtruction. So much have theſe things prevailed with them, that their lives were not precious in their own eyes. It is a great reproach to us, if we refuſe to ſuffer that for the ſake of Chriſt and his Goſpel which others have ſuffered for the ſake of this World. The Heathen could not but take notice of this ſpeaking of death: *Seeſt thou not* (ſays he) *upon what frivolous accounts it is contemned? One hangs himſelf at the door of his Miſtris: Another throws himſelf headlong from the houſe top to avoid a churliſh and unquiet*

Tranti vitream? Quanti veram Margaritam? Tertul. ad Martyr.

Senec. Ep. 4.

quiet Maſter, Another ſtabs himſelf that he may prevent his return home. Doſt thou not think that vertue might have done that which an exceſs of fear hath done? Shall a fooliſh Luſt and an impotent Paſſion have more force than the ſenſe of our duly and the well grounded hopes of eternal happineſs? We read in our Books of ſome that have ſacrificed their lives to their Fame, or thrown them away in compliance with the fooliſh cuſtoms of their Country, or from a Principle of Superſtition; *It is a very aſtoniſhing thing* (ſays one of the Heathens) *that Ignorance and Oſtentation ſhould be more powerful than Wiſdom.*

M. Anton. l. 5. ſc. 14.

We have a ſtory in the Acts of our Church, of a man in Queen *Maries* days, who, when he was put in mind to ſuffer for that truth which he had for ſome time profeſſed, replied, that *he could not burn.* Nor did he burn for his Religion; But in the days of Queen

Queen *Elizabeth* this man's houſe was on fire, and then to ſave his Goods he adventures into his houſe, and he and his Goods were burnt in the ſame flames. He that would not burn to ſave his Soul, ventures into the fire to preſerve his Goods. And, then he loſt his Goods and his Life, and (it is to be feared) his Soul alſo.

III. The good man does not want very great conſiderations to perſwade him to quit this preſent life for the ſake of a better. He is well aſſured that by thus loſing his life he ſhall ſave it; That he ſhall be aſſiſted in his conflict, and rewarded when he hath finiſhed his courſe. He is not left without a Comforter, and he is aſſured of a plentiful Reward. He knows in whom he hath believed, and can commit the keeping of his Soul unto God as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Pet. 4. 19. He does but put off his fleſh, and knows that he ſhall be cloathed with life and immortality. He does

but

but part with an earthly Tabernacle for a building not made with hands. And by his constant sufferings he glorifies God, spreads his truth, confirms his Servants, and makes way for a greater glory to himself.

Do not then fear to follow your Lord, and all those blessed Souls that have led the way. When your Lord commands, make no demur, but follow him chearfully, though it be to the place of skulls. It is not worth your while to preserve your life with the loss of your innocence. Gods favour is more than life, and that will stand us in stead when this life shall be no more. It is a madness to forfeit our eternal hopes that we may live here a little longer; especially when our life will be but a plague and burden to us, when we have purchased it with the loss of our innocence. We shall find the horrours of a guilty mind more painful than the flames, and much more

more laſting alſo. Alas! we do but run our ſelves into eternal horrors to avoid a ſhort affliction: There is a Worm that dies not, and a Fire that goes not out.

If we ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake happy are we: We ſhall not want the ſupports of the Spirit, the Miniſtry of Angels, the powerful Interceſſion of the Son of God, the peace and quiet of our own minds, and ſhall in a little time be received into unſpeakable Joy. In the mean time it is but little we loſe, a ſhort life, a ſtrait and uncertain one. That which was always burdenſom, full of care, and uneaſie through hope and fear of what was to come. We loſe our life indeed: But alas! What is that? It is but a vapour, and a dream: That which we could not long have kept. A diſeaſe, a Tile from an houſe, a fall from a Horſe, a thruſt of an Enemy, the ſmalleſt matter might have taken it away the next moment. We loſe our life:

life: But we loſe it honourably, and ſo we cannot properly be ſaid to loſe it. We die for Chriſt, that died for us; For the ſake of him who thought nothing too much for us: For the beſt perſon that ever appeared in humane nature, and one that hath deſerved the beſt of us. We die: But it is for our greateſt Friend, for our Lord and King: For him that is at Gods right hand, and gone thither to prepare a place for us. We die: But it is that we may live for ever, and we do but exchange our mortal life for glory and immortality.

On the other hand, ſuppoſe we ſhould draw back, and, to ſave our lives, wrong our Conſciences; What ſhall we gain by this? We ſhall live a while longer, enjoy our Preferments and our outward Comforts: But alas! Whither ſhall we cauſe our ſhame to go? When we have out-lived our Innocence, proſtituted our Conſcience, and made ſhip-

ſhipwrack of our Faith, what good will our life do us? It only keeps our bodies from putrefaction, and reſpits a little our eternal miſery; our joy and our ſtrength is gone, when we have denied the Faith; and now we are juſtly deteſted by God and good men, and are but a burden and terror to our ſelves. And as we are uneaſie to our ſelves now, ſo when death approaches us (for we ſhall not long ſtave it off) then our unſpeakable miſery begins. Then death will be more terrible to us than ever it was before, and yet we muſt ſubmit our necks whether we are willing or not.

But ſome will object perhaps that they have lived at a trifling rate, and they do therefore much doubt of their future ſtate. And though they be aſſured of the goodneſs of their cauſe, and are not much afraid of death, yet they fear ſomething beyond death, becauſe they have not lived ſo exactly as *Object.*

as they ought. Such men as these are in a ſtrait, like that of the *Iſraelites*, who were placed between the perſecuting *Egyptians* and the Red Sea, and will be tempted rather to return into *Egypt* than adventure themſelves upon the violent floud of waters. Now in anſwer to this Objection, I ſhall deſire them that make it to conſider the following particulars:

I. That by declining to ſuffer in this caſe they do but render their Salvation the more hazardous and doubtful, ſo far are they from ſecuring themſelves and their main concern. For they run into a known ſin, and conſequently hazard their Salvation, for which they pretend at the ſame time to be ſollicitous. There is no doubt but ſuch a man may flee from the Perſecution if he can, but it can never be ſafe for him to renounce his Religion, and deny his Saviour before men. We allow ſick people, when

when their caſe is doubtful, ſome things which we do not adviſe them to, but no man in his wits will let them drink Poyſon, or take in any thing that commonly deſtroys the life of a man. Our Religion does not allow us to do evil that good may come. And a certain ſin cannot tend to the ſecuring, but does always and directly tend to the deſtruction of our Souls. It is certain, what ever pretence we make, we have no regard as we ought to have for our Souls, when we willingly commit a ſin againſt God; For by committing a known ſin, we do but run into that evil which we pretend we fear and would decline.

2. And therefore I add, that we ought to ſuffer, and commit our ſelves unto God, notwithſtanding the doubt and fear we are under. For this is certainly our duty, and no matter of queſtion, and therefore we ought not to demur. Our duty is plain, and our doubt ariſes not

not from what we are to do, but from the effects of what we have done. We cannot give a better teſtimony of our ſincere repentance for what hath been done amiſs than by giving our ſelves up to the will of God. Whereas by declining to ſuffer, and chooſing to ſin we withdraw our ſelves from Gods protection, and proclaim our ſelves not only ſinners, but *Impenitents* alſo. And it is a *ſign* that we are not much concerned for our former ſins when we dare add to their *number* ſo great and hainous an one. Whereas on the other hand, when we give up our lives to God, notwithſtanding our fears and doubts of our future ſtate, we give the greateſt demonſtration of our ſincere repentance for our ſins paſt, and take a direct courſe to obtain our pardon and remiſſion. In this caſe to give up our lives is the greateſt expreſſion of a ſincere repentance, and of a ſtedfaſt faith in God. It is a great

wiſdom

wiſdom in us in this caſe to chooſe to fall into the hands of that God whoſe mercies are above all his works. And we can never conſult better for our ſelves, than by doing our duty, whatever pain or loſs it do expoſe us to.

3. That among the Ancient Writers of the Church we have a very favourable opinion relating to this matter: And it was this, that Martyrdom was a kind of Baptiſm, by which remiſſion of ſins was obtained, and which did ſuperſede the indiſpenſable neceſſity of that Sacrament, ſerving in the room and ſtead of it. This St. *Auſtin* reckons among the opinions of the Church. I ſhall not examine the grounds and foundations of this opinion; but this I ſhall ſay, that as it was a general opinion among the Ancients (who notwithſtanding maintained the neceſſity of an holy life) ſo it does, as it is laid down by the Father above-named, deſerve at leaſt a

Aug. de Civitat. Dei l. 13. c. 7.

Id. de Eccleſ. Dogmat.

favourable regard; especially since he grounds it upon that promise of our Saviour, *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*

Mat. 10. 32.

4. It is very advisable, that he that hath done amiss should by all the ways possible testifie the sincerity of his Repentance. If his sins have been against his Neighbour, he ought to be reconciled, and to make restitution as far as he is able: And whatever his sin hath been, he ought to confess it, and to shame himself for it, and to give all the possible proofs of a through, and hearty, and particular repentance, as far as his time and ability will reach, and he must to this purpose call in Gods help, and implore his grace and mercy in Christ Jesus: And then if afterward he give his body to be burnt, as a farther token of his Contrition, he will not lose his reward. There is a fond opinion among the Jewish Writers,

Writers, that the death of a Criminal expiates for his Crimes. But yet one of their wiſer Writers tells us, that neither the Sacrifice which the ſinner brought, nor the death which was inflicted on him did make expiation for him, unleſs he did repent. Maimon. H. Teſhub. C. 1.

5. They that now make this Objection ought to make the right Uſe of it. That is, they ought forthwith to ſet upon an holy life, upon crucifying their luſts, and killing their ſins, that ſo they may not be afraid of death in what form ſoever it ſhall preſent it ſelf. They ought to provide for ſufferings, and eſpecially for death, before it makes its approach unto them.

CHAP. X.

I Shall now proceed to ſhew what preparations we ought to make againſt Sufferings, and how we are to demean our ſelves under them.

We ought to conſider beforehand, that we may meet with great trials and exerciſes in our way to to heaven. And it very well becomes us to provide againſt the worſt of things. And this is very reaſonable, becauſe if we ſhould not be called out to ſuffer for our Religion, yet we ſhall be ſure to die, and it is our duty, as well as our intereſt, to provide for death. And therefore what I have to offer cannot be unſeaſonable, becauſe it will ſerve to prepare us for our other ſufferings, and for the ſtroke of death, though we ſhould not be perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake.

ſake. And it is a fooliſh thing not to prepare for death in the time of our proſperity and our health. I ſhall therefore recommend to you ſome particulars which will be of great Uſe to us to prepare us for our bearing all ſort of afflictions, and particularly tend to deliver us from the fear of violence and death it ſelf. And to that purpoſe,

1. Make it your care to bear witneſs to the Truth, by your lives; and this will be a great preparation againſt all evils, and even againſt death it ſelf. In this ſenſe we may all be Martyrs though we do not ſhed our bloud: For we may bear witneſs to the Truth by our life as well as by our death. And the doing it by a good life is the beſt preparative to the other Martyrdom of bloud. We may by *well-doing*, as well as by *ſuffering well*, put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men. *If there be no Tyrant,* (ſays one of the Ancients) *no*

1 Pet. 2. 15.

Cyprian. de duplici Martyrio.

Tormentor, no Plunderer, yet there will be Concupiſcence giving us daily matter of Martyrdom. Beſides, the evils of this mortal life, that are common to the good and bad, will afford us the Crown of Martyrdom if we bear them with alacrity and thanksgiving. — Who dares deny (ſays he) *Abraham, and Iſaac, and Job to be Martyrs? What Racks did ever torment the body more than natural affection tortured the mind of that Patriarch, when he, in compliance with Gods Command, was ready to offer up his Son, his only and beloved Son, in whom was the hope of Poſterity? What was wanting to the making Iſaac a Martyr, who without murmuring ſuffered himſelf to be bound, and laid upon the wood? Whoſe Martyrdom may we compare with the things which Job ſuffered?* The ſame Author does well obſerve, that in that Catalogue of Saints and holy men, (*Heb.* 11.) though there were but few of them died a violent death, yet

yet to let us ſee that we might be Martyrs by an exemplary life, it is ſaid of them, that *by faith they obtained a good report.* To which I add, that they are all called *Martyrs* or *Witneſſes* afterward. We ſhall have fair occaſion to ſhew our Courage, our Patience, our Reſignation, and our Faith, though we do not ſuffer upon a Wheel, or at a Stake. And he that bears all his other troubles well, is in a great preparation to ſuffer death alſo. Whereas thoſe men that are impatient and peeviſh under every little ſorrow and croſs, have much to do before they will be fit to endure the ſevereſt torments. If then we would be able to endure a violent death for the ſake of our Saviour, let us ſet upon the practice of the hardeſt of his Precepts. Let us cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right Eyes, part with our moſt beloved luſts, and crucifie the deſires of the fleſh. Let us mortifie our in-

Ἐμαρτυρήθησαν. Heb. 11. 2.

Ch. 12. 1. Μαρτύρων.

ordinate Anger, deſtroy all wrath and bitterneſs, all our covetous deſires and ſenſualities. Here is a great and difficult task before us; if we do this, death will not much aſtoniſh us: We ſhall not be greatly afraid of death when we ſee our ſins and luſts dead before us: Thoſe luſts, which made death a formidable evil to us. No man is ſo fearleſs of death as that man that is crucified to the world, and hath mortified his inordinate deſire of worldly things. If in the whole courſe of our life we give up our ſelves to the Laws of Chriſt, if we exerciſe our ſelves to patience, and ſelf-denial, to meekneſs and long-ſuffering, to Temperance and Chaſtity, to contempt of the world, and an heavenly mind, we ſhall find it a very eaſie task when we ſhall be required to reſign up our mortal life for the ſake of our Lord Jeſus. He that obeys Chriſt in all his holy and ſtricteſt Precepts, will be in great readineſs and prepa-

preparation of mind to lay down his life for him. He that dares *kill* his *Luſts*, and crucifie the *old man*, will not think much to reſign this mortal life that he may be cloathed with Immortality. When one bid *Socrates* prepare for his trial; He asked him, whether he thought he had not done that all his life-time: But then again he asked *Socrates*, what preparation he had made? He told him, that he had done what was in his power to do. He asked him, *How? Socrates* told him, he had never *done an unjuſt action publickly or privately.* If we would prepare for ſufferings, and for death, let us do it by a good life, and commit the keeping of our ſouls to God in *well-doing.*

Τετήρηκα τὸ ἐπ' ἐμοί. Arrian. Epict. l. 2. c. 2.

1 Pet. 4. 19.

2. Entertain your ſelves with the thoughts of troubles, and the frequent thoughts of death, before they come nigh you. It is of great moment that we be not ſuprized by the evils which we meet withal. It is a great aſtoniſhment to us to meet

meet with evils which we thought not of before: He is a very miſerable man indeed who promiſed himſelf pleaſure, and meets with ſorrow, and ſo is he that meets with ſome miſery that he never expected: It is a great piece of wiſdom to ſuppoſe the worſt which may happen. Death does greatly aſtoniſh the man that thought of living long and pleaſantly, of going to ſuch a City, and buying, and ſelling and getting gain. The Apoſtle would not have them, to whom he writes, look upon the fiery trial as ſome *ſtrange thing*. If we would bear our troubles, let us expect them, that when they come we may not be ſurprized. When we have often thought of them before, we ſhall in great meaſure deſpiſe them; whereas if we be ſurprized, we ſhall be aſtoniſhed with a ſmall evil. Much of our miſery ariſes from our inconſideration. Men that go to Sea ought not to promiſe themſelves a Calm, and a good wind:

1 Pet. 4. 12.

wind: They ought to ſuppoſe they may meet with Tempeſts and contrary Winds. Why ſhould we ſuppoſe our ſelves exempt from the common condition of mankind? We are born to troubles, and muſt certainly die, and may die a violent death: This we ought to think of frequently. If we bury our friend: We knew he was mortal before, and we never expected immortality from a mortal Creature. You loſe your goods perhaps; But you ſhould have conſidered that thoſe external things were ſubject to this loſs; That they were things which Moth might corrupt, or Thieves might ſteal. It will not become a wiſe man in theſe caſes to ſay, that he did not think that ſuch things could have hapned to him. For whatever hath hapned to another, may alſo happen to me. And I may as well admire that what is brittle, ſhould break, or what is combuſtible, ſhould burn, as that what is mortal ſhould die, or what is

without

without me ſhould be taken from me.

We ſhould prevent much of our trouble if we would but expect it before hand, and look for it. And to think very often and ſeriouſly of death, would deliver us in great meaſure from the fears and terrours of it. Familiarity, even in this ſenſe, breeds contempt. The Fox in the Fable was greatly afraid when he firſt ſaw a Lion, but leſs afraid the ſecond time, and after that was ſo far from fear that he came near him, and converſed with him. The frequent thoughts of death will rid us of much of our fears of it. And it muſt needs be ſo, becauſe they tend very much to prepare and diſpoſe us for it: For theſe thoughts are apt to awaken in us a care to live well, and that is a mean to deliver us from our ſlaviſh fears. It was wiſely ſaid by the Son of *Syrach*, *Whatſoever thou takeſt in hand, remember the end, and thou ſhalt never do amiſs.* The due

Eccluſ. 7. 36.

conſi-

conſideration of our death is one of thoſe things which an Ancient Jew tells us will keep men from tranſgreſſion. To think of death is a great inſtrument of Vertue and true Wiſdom. It will help to ſlake our luſts, bridle our deſires of wealth and honour, and ſtop our courſe of ſinning. It will ſerve to quicken our devotions, to wean us from this life, and to excite us to well-doing. It is of great moment towards our reſiſting temptations, which now gain upon us, and the putting us upon the careful ſpending the ſeveral portions of our time. *Let death be always before thine eyes* (ſays the Heathen) *and thou wilt not mind any low or mean thing, nor greatly deſire any thing.* Pirke Avoth. c. 3. m. 1. Epictet. Enchir. c. 28.

III. Uſe your ſelves to labour, to a ſevere courſe of life. Do not indulge your appetite and your ſloth, but give up your ſelves to great diligence and induſtry. He that would endure the greateſt pain

pain and torment muſt harden and prepare himſelf by degrees, and inure himſelf to bear the Yoak betimes. A ſoft and ſenſual life will render us very unfit for a fiery trial. And he that knows not how to deny his licentious appetite what it at any time craves, will be very unfit to be a Martyr. It will well become us to keep under our bodies, and to withdraw from them ſome of thoſe Supplies which they ~~it~~ craves, that we may be the better prepared to endure greater hardſhips. Let us learn to contemn ſenſual pleaſures, and to deprive our ſelves of ſome of our liberties, that we may the more patiently bear the being totally deprived. Let us ſtrip our ſelves of ſome of our conveniencies of life, and we ſhall the more patiently bear the being ſtripped of all the reſt. They that run in Races were wont to exerciſe before. And the Souldier is trained and uſed to labour and wearineſs before he comes to the

Miles ſupervacuo labore laſſatur, ut ſufficere neceſſario poſſit. Sen. Ep. 18.

the battel; They did this that they might be able to overcome when they were put to the trial: They that indulge themſelves in a delicate and ſoft life will be very unfit for great ſeverities. *Woe be to them that are at eaſe in Zion.* We ſhall be afraid of dying if we give up our ſelves to a ſenſual life. Senſual pleaſures do much indiſpoſe us for the buſineſs of this, as well as for the bliſs of a future life. *Take heed to your ſelves leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares.* Death and ſufferings will be a great ſurprize and terrour to all them that have lived at eaſe. *Oh death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at reſt in his poſſeſſions?* Luke 21. 34. Eccluſ. 41. 1.

IV. Make it now your conſtant care to reſign up your Will to the Will of God. Let this be your daily exerciſe as it is your Prayer. By this means you will be wonted

to

to that Leſſon which makes way for a patient ſuffering, even death it ſelf, whenever it ſhall pleaſe God to call us to it. You will be very unfit to reſign your ſelves up to death it ſelf, if you have not formerly made it your great care to bring your own Wills to a compliance with the Will of God. We are never ſafe till it is thus with us, and when ever we are arrived to this, we are ſecure, and ſufficiently prepared for all events of things. Nothing now will be able to make us miſerable, becauſe nothing can poſſibly befall us againſt our wills. For as nothing can make us happy but God, ſo nothing can make us miſerable but our own Will; and that does never hurt us but when it runs Counter to the Will of God. This is the way to peace and reſt, to part with our *own Will*, and to ſuffer it to be guided and governed by the *Divine*. If it be thus with us, we ſhall be quiet and ſtill under every Calami-

Calamity, ſafe under every ſtroke, and fitted for what ever may happen to us. Thus it was with our Saviour; He prayed, that if it were poſſible the Cup might paſs, but then he adds, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* There is great danger in neglecting our duty in this matter, and he will be very ready to deny his Lord, who hath not throughly learned this Leſſon. Whatever happens to us, now let us reſign our ſelves to Gods Will. Is my deareſt Friend, or Child dead! Is our health impaired! Is our Eſtate waſted! Let us ſay always, *Let the will of the Lord be done.* By theſe ſteps we ſhall perfectly learn this Leſſon, and practiſe it then when God ſhall ſend for us by death into another World.

V. Do all the good which you can. This tends to the making our death more eaſie unto us: For our account is leſſened hereby, and conſequently death it ſelf is the leſs

to be feared. Beſides that, acts of mercy have a promiſe of mercy belonging to them. They that ſhew mercy ſhall receive it. It is enough that they are ſure of their reward. 5 This takes away much of the terrour of death it ſelf. And the merciful man is well dealt with if he be ſupported under the Agonies of death. This is better for him than to be delivered
Pſal.41.3. from it. And we know there is a particular promiſe of ſupport to the merciful man, even then when he is threatned with death. On the other hand, he that ſhews no mercy muſt not expect to find it. He that hides his Talent in a Napkin is unprepared to meet his Lord: He will have a very ſad account, not only that ſquanders away, but he that hides his Lords Money.

VI. Frequently and diligently examine your ſelves. Call your ſelves to a ſtrict and ſevere account often. This will be a great preparation for any evils which may happen

happen to us, and againſt death it ſelf. We ſhall never be ſafe if we do not take this courſe. For this examination is in order to the knowing our *ſtate* to God-ward, and to our *repentance*, and conſequently our *pardon*. We muſt confeſs our ſins, and in order to that we muſt know them: For our Confeſſion, the more general it is, the more dangerous; the more particular, the more ſafe. For though we hope for pardon upon a general repentance where we cannot find out all our ſecret ſins, yet this does not give us hope of pardon upon a general repentance, where upon ſearch we may be more particular. From whence it may eaſily appear how much a ſtrict and diligent examination of our ſelves tends to our comfort and our peace, and how much it does diſpoſe and prepare us for ſufferings, and for death it ſelf. We are at eaſe and at liberty when our accounts are cleared and ſetled;

Whereas it is a burden to every honeſt mind to think that his affairs are entangled and perplexed, and that he is not able to adjuſt his accounts. Let any man but ſeriouſly conſider how much he offends every day, either in doing what he ſhould not, or not doing what he ſhould; In omitting his duty, or in doing it ſlightly, and he will ſoon find he hath work to do at the cloſe of every day before he betake himſelf to reſt. And then ſure he will be very unfit for death, if he have the follies and errors of a whole life, or a great part of it, to unravel, and to account for. Such a man muſt needs be full of fears and jealouſies that all is not right, who hath not been very careful to try whether it be ſo or not. It were well that this ſelf-examination were the work of every day. For as we might find enough to employ our ſelves in, without troubling our ſelves with the faults of our Neighbeurs, ſo I

am ſure, we could not take a better courſe to ſecure our own ſouls. And it was required that a man ſhould examine himſelf before he received the Communion, at that time when Chriſtians communicated very frequently, if not every day. And though we excuſe our ſelves too eaſily from frequent communicating, yet they that do that cannot deny, but that it is their duty to be prepared for it, and conſequently, to examine themſelves alſo. 1 Cor. 11. 28.

VII. Set your houſe in order. My meaning is, that we would do that duty which we owe to one another, in order to our more comfortable paſſage hence: And there are many things that fall under this head which every wiſe and good man would do before he goes hence. Such are, the making our Wills, and ſetling our worldly Eſtate; making reſtitution, where we have done wrong; being reconciled where there hath been a

grudge or difference; disburdening our Conſciences where they are oppreſſed; ſeeking ſatisfaction where we are in doubt, and clearing our accounts with others where they are entangled. Theſe things, and ſuch like, have a tendency toward the comfort and eaſe of our minds; and when they are done, we are left at greater liberty and freedom chearfully to bear whatever evil God thinks fit to exerciſe us with.

VIII. Be very much in Religious Exerciſes, and in the Service of God: Such as reading and hearing, meditating of heavenly things, and receiving the Sacrament, and frequent Abſtractions from the hurries and the amuſements of this lower world.

But eſpecially, let us give our ſelves much to Prayer; Let us with all humility and fervour, with all attention and watchfulneſs, with proſtrate ſouls and broken hearts implore the aid and aſſiſtance of God

God and of his Holy Spirit, that we may continue faithful unto death that we may receive the Crown of righteouſneſs. Prayer is very ſeaſonable at ſuch a time as this, and it is recommended to us from the Example as well as from the Precept of our bleſſed Saviour; of whom it is ſaid, that being in an Agony he prayed more earneſtly. Jam. 5. 13. Luk. 21. 36 22. 44.

I ſhall now ſhew you how we are to demean and behave our ſelves under our ſufferings. And before I do that I ſhall premiſe the following particulars:

Firſt, That we ought not to run after ſufferings, and to bring them upon our ſelves. We are not obliged to throw away our lives, but to ſtay till God calls for them at our hand. Our Religion allows us the wiſdom of Serpents, though it ſtrictly require the innocence of Doves. It is lawful in ſome caſes to flee and decline our ſufferings, and in many Caſes it is fit and

Mat. 10. 23. expedient that we ſhould do ſo. By this means we may reſerve our ſelves for farther ſervice, and avoid the temptation. But if our flight betray our Religion, and endanger our Brethren that are under our charge, we ought to ſtand to it, and rather part with our lives. Our lives are then to be given up, when we gain a greater end; but they are ſo long to be preſerved, as we may keep them without prejudice to our Conſcience, and the Salvation of our Brother.

Secondly, That we are to take great heed that we do not ſuffer as evil doers. *Let none of you ſuffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a buſie-body in other mens matters.* It is the cauſe, not the ſuffering which makes the Martyr. We are happy if we ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake. Rebellion and Treaſon againſt our Prince cannot make men Saints and Martyrs. Theſe men are evil doers whatever

1 Pet 4. 15.

ever tokens of fortitude they ſeem to ſhew.

I now proceed to ſhew how we ought to demean our ſelves under our ſufferings: And that you may take in the following particulars, which concern us as we ſtand related to God, to our Neighbour, and to our ſelves. And,

I. As to God, whoſe hand we muſt look at, we muſt ſuffer without murmuring and repining: We muſt entirely reſign up our ſelves unto God; and imitate our bleſſed Saviour, when he ſaid, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* Our Lord went like a Sheep to the ſlaughter, he opened not his mouth. It becomes us to refer all to Gods wiſdom and diſpoſal, not to chooſe the kind and form of our ſufferings, but to leave all that to him, and depend intirely upon him. *It is the Lord,* (we ought to ſay) *let him do what is good in his own eyes.*

II. As to our Neighbour, and eſpecially thoſe who are the inſtruments

ments of our ſufferings, we are to ſhew the greateſt meekneſs and charity. In this our Saviour was a great pattern; *Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatned not, but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly.* It becomes us to imitate this glorious example; us it becomes who are vile ſinners, and have deſerved our ſufferings from Gods hand, though we ſuffer in a righteous Cauſe. *Father forgive them* (ſays our dying Lord) *for they know not what they do.* Our Lord did not threaten his enemies: No, he pitied them, and he prayed for them. And ſo muſt we do alſo if we would ſuffer as Chriſtians. We muſt forgive our Enemies, pity them as we do people that are blind, or delirant: Their folly, and their rage and madneſs call for our compaſſions, and our hearty Prayers for their precious and immortal ſouls. Thus St. *Cyprian* deſcribes the

1 Pet. 2. 22, 23.

De dupl. Martyr.

the manner of Chriſtians ſufferings: *We ſee not* (ſays he) *that placid, and meek, and ſublime temper of mind, joyned with humility, unleſs it be in the Martyrs of Chriſt. They do not look upon the Executioner with fierce eyes, they do not threaten the Tyrant: They are more grieved for their blindneſs, than for their own afflictions; Even Chriſt cries in them, Father forgive them,* &c. *They look at nothing but heaven, where their hope is laid up,* &c.

III. As to our ſelves that we undergo our ſufferings undauntedly, and with conſtancy, that we do not any thing unbecoming our Chriſtian Profeſſion; It is not to be imagined but that the Chriſtian hath as quick a ſenſe of pain as any other man; he is not ſtupid, and unconcerned; all that is required is this, that he hold out with courage and Chriſtian Fortitude, and be not betrayed by his fear. It is not neceſſary that he ſhould be rid of all fear: It is enough

enough that it do not prevail upon him ſo far as to cauſe him to diſtruſt God, or deny the Truth. It is not every one that can triumph in Flames, and ſhew tokens of joy upon Racks and Wheels: It is not every Martyr that can expreſs great
2 Cor. 7. 5. exultation of mind. Some fear is very conſiſtent with the greateſt Sanctity: He is not to be deprived of the glory of Martyrdom, that continues conſtant under his ſufferings, though he went to them with fear and ſuſpicion of himſelf.

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